Ministry of Education

ANNUAL REPORT

July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000

BRITISH COLUMBIA

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To The Honourable Garde Gardom
Lieutenant Governor of the Province of British Columbia

May It Please Your Honour

Appointed Minister of Education in June, 2001, I respectfully submit the One Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Annual Report of the Ministry of Education, covering the period from July 1, 1999 to June 30, 2000.

Christy Clark
Minister of Education

102-00174/

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EDUCATION IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Social and Economic Conditions Affect Education

Education does not operate in a vacuum. What schools teach, how they are organized and funded, how well students perform, who graduates and who does not – all these things are influenced, to a degree, by socio-economic factors in the world outside.

For instance, the population of BC is aging. In the future there may be pressure to direct more funding toward health care. Many teachers in BC are nearing retirement. This is expected to cause teacher shortages in the near future and reduce the overall experience level of BC teachers. It will also reduce average teacher salaries, since less experienced teachers earn less. All over North America there is a growing need for more teachers.

The number of children living in poverty in BC is increasing.[1] Research shows strong links between child poverty and failure in school. There are also increasing numbers of children identified with special needs. The cost of delivering education to these students is higher than for other students.

Public expectations of what education should deliver are changing. There is increasing emphasis on foundational learning. But there is also an expectation that schools should teach citizenship and social skills as well. Changes in the economy and the work environment have also increased demands for childcare.

BC remains among the lowest ranked provinces for rates of direct transition to university. The causes for this are unclear. The data indicate that only 40.6 percent of high school graduates are eligible for university (see Glossary for definition of University Eligibility). There may be other reasons, such as an under-performing or changing economy, not enough spaces in universities, or the expectation that there will be jobs in the resource industries not requiring university education.

The job market in BC is also changing. The service industry now is the dominant employer. Jobs in service industries require strong social and communication skills. Jobs in all sectors of the economy now require increasingly higher levels of skills. People without these skills will be at a disadvantage. More technology in the workplace will mean that students will need strong technical and social skills if they are to find employment.

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[1] "Weighing the Evidence: A Report on BC's Children and Youth", The BC Children's Commission 1999 Annual Report, page 35.

BC's Public School System

Roles and Responsibilities

The Ministry of Education's primary function is to provide leadership and support for education from Kindergarten to Grade 12. As well, the ministry provides advice to the Minister and government, and reflects the government's wishes in the form of legislation, regulations, orders and policies. It does not directly provide educational services to students, nor does it directly manage any schools.

The most important ministry work is setting standards for what students are expected to learn and establishing the framework by which government funds are distributed to support the education system. The ministry must also demonstrate that the legislation, regulations, orders and policies that it administers are achieving the results desired by government. It holds itself, the school boards and the independent schools to which authority is devolved accountable for results by two means: monitoring and reporting the extent to which important goals are being achieved, and audits of a variety of sub-components of the education system.

Roughly two thirds of all ministry policy is accessible via the Internet, and this proportion is increasing. The ministry also plays an important role in keeping parents and the public informed about what BC's children are learning, how resources are being used, and how students are performing.

The school boards of BC's 59 school districts and the Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique are responsible for ensuring that schools provide students with opportunities for quality education. Boards are accountable to the public for allocating funds according to collective agreements, local conditions and priorities, and for the quality and cost-effectiveness of the programs they deliver. They also ensure that educators follow provincial legislation and policies. Public schools in British Columbia are funded mostly by provincial grants. They have non-restrictive admission policies and an obligation to meet the needs of all students.

Independent schools that meet specific standards consistent with the *Independent School Act* may also receive per-student grants of up to 50 percent of the student costs of local public schools.

Setting clear standards

The ministry has developed Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs) which provide the basic information teachers require to implement curriculum. IRPs consist of prescribed learning outcomes which are statements of what students are expected to know and do at an indicated grade level, suggested ideas for instruction, a list of recommended learning resources (books, videos, electronic resources, etc.) and possible methods for teachers to use in evaluating students' progress.

Further guidelines for evaluation are provided by Performance Standards, which describe the professional judgments of a significant number of BC educators about expectations for reading, writing, numeracy, and social responsibility.

A new province-wide assessment of basic skills, the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA), provides public and independent school students with a clear performance standard for reading, writing, and numeracy.

Smaller classes, more teachers, better facilities

The 1999/2000 school year was marked by smaller elementary classes, more teachers, and more classrooms. Almost 2100 new teachers were hired in 1999/2000, while about 550 teachers retired and 300 resigned.

In an effort to improve students' learning environment, the number of portable classrooms was reduced from 3158 in June 1998 to under 3000 in September 1999. By the year 2003 it is targeted that only 1,550, or roughly half, will remain.

Technology

Computer technology gives students and educators greater access to information. British Columbia has connected all schools to each other and to the Internet through the completion of the Provincial Learning Network (PLNet), which links elementary, secondary and post-secondary institutions and provides access to the Internet, teaching support materials, and advanced forms of distance learning such as video conferencing. PLNet is one of the largest educational networks in North America.

Throughout 1999/2000, the Open School continued to provide distance education resources for all school districts province wide. Distance education permits K-12 students to complete all or part of their studies by correspondence or online courses. School districts use Open School to support classroom, alternative education, and teacher professional development programs.

Distributed Electronic Learning programs support home-based schooling under the supervision of school districts or distance education schools.

In the spring of 2000, the ministry began preparation for two new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) integration initiatives: the Grades 6-9 ICT Integration Project and the Applied Computers Skills 11 program. Both of these pilot projects, targeted for full implementation in 2000/2001, are intended to increase use of technology in the classroom through the provision of resources, expertise and support.

Throughout 1999/2000, the ministry continued to work closely with Industry Canada in support of several school and classroom-based initiatives intended to enhance connectivity, promote innovation in education technology uses and to support the exchange of information on best practices in teaching and learning.

Awards and scholarships

To encourage achievement and help students make the transition to post-secondary education, the ministry funds numerous scholarships, bursaries, awards, grants, and competitions. In 1999/2000 the Passport to Education program distributed 68,859 awards. Provincial scholarships were distributed to 4,221 recipients.

Adult Graduation Program

British Columbia school districts provide the opportunity for adults to attain secondary school education through their various adult graduation programs. Adult graduation programs are offered in every school district, with most districts delivering their adult programs through adult learning centres. British Columbia currently graduates about 1100 adults every year.

Connections to Post-Secondary Education and Training

Career Programs

Career Programs are offered by school boards to students in grades 11 and 12 and consist of classroom-based courses combined with community-based work experience placements that range from 120 to 480 hours. Career Programs are intended to support the ministry objectives of increasing Grade 12 Dogwood Completion rates and increasing successful transition to either post-secondary education/training or direct entrance to the workplace. School boards provided Career Program services to almost 51,000 students during 1999/2000, a seven-fold increase from less than 7,000 students ten years ago.

In response to an evaluation conducted in 1998/99 the ministry implemented several changes to Career Programs during 1999/2000. These included:

- Introduction of accountability measures that link funding more closely to student completion of their selected program.
- Increased support and resources for the Secondary School Apprenticeship program.
- Financial support for resources that increase the quality and success of locally developed Career Programs. Major funding was provided to TechWORKS, which assisted school districts with quality work experience placements in technology-based industries, as well as with career resources for schools to use in career centres.
- Increased ministry leadership in setting direction for Career Programs, including improved communication with schools and districts on program outcomes, policies and issues. A Career Programs newsletter is now sent electronically each month to career educators and administrators.

Recent efforts to make Career Programs more accountable for results are showing success. Work experience completion rates have increased from 57.9 percent to 65.6 percent over the past two years. The Grade 12 graduation rate for Career Programs students (82.2 percent) is higher than for non-Career Programs students (75.1 percent).

Ministry Partnerships with MAETT and ITAC

In partnership with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology (MAETT) and the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission (ITAC), the Ministry of Education helps students bridge the gap between secondary school and post-secondary education or the workplace. During 1999/2000 the following initiatives were undertaken in partnership with MAETT:

- The list of dual-credit courses was expanded in 1999/2000. These courses allow Grade 11 and 12 students to get a head start on post-secondary studies by earning credit for approved post-secondary courses while counting these courses toward secondary school completion.
- Enable students to proceed from secondary school to certificate and diploma programs and on to degree programs and into the workplace. Each level of programming is connected by formal agreements that have industry endorsement.
- Secondary system representatives participated on the 68 Provincial Post-Secondary Articulation Committees for common subject areas across the two systems (see Glossary for definition of articulation).

During 1999/2000 the following initiative was continued in partnership with ITAC:

- The Secondary School Apprenticeship Program, providing students with a seamless transition to apprenticeship training and the workplace by allowing students to begin training while completing secondary school.

Career Technical Centres (CTCs)

Career Technical Centres are partnerships among the K-12 system, the public post-secondary system and employers and are designed to eliminate barriers to student transition to post-secondary education and the workplace in the trades and technology areas. Financial support for the centres is jointly provided by the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission. CTCs allow students to simultaneously earn their secondary school diplomas and first-year post-secondary or industry certification in less than three years.

Currently there are nine regional CTCs in the province delivering or planning to deliver CTC programs.

Programs To Meet Equity Needs in the School System

The ministry promotes equity for all students. This is achieved in part through supports for specialized programs: Aboriginal Education, Programme francophone, French Immersion, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Special Education Programs, plus the Safe Schools Initiative.

In 1999/2000, 17 percent of the students enrolled in BC's schools came from homes in which languages other than English are spoken. As a result, about ten percent of all public school students received English as Second Language services supported by ministry funding.

In 1999/2000, ministry special education funding supported equitable access to education for 66,350 identified students, 11 per cent of the student population in the province (plus a significant number of students not identified in any category). The ministry also provided funding to support students with special needs through Provincial Resource Programs that address these needs in highly specialized circumstances. Government conducted a formal review of special education in 1999/2000 that confirmed the policy direction of the ministry, to be followed by implementation of the recommendations over the next three school years.

Aboriginal Education

With an enrolment of nearly 44,000, Aboriginal students made up 7.2 percent of the students in BC public schools in 1999/2000. Numbers have been increasing since 1990 when about 23,500 students, or 4.5 percent of all K-12 students, were identified as Aboriginal.

The performance of Aboriginal students has been improving at a modest rate in recent years. However, these students still complete high school at about half the rate of their non-Aboriginal counterparts and their transition rates from Grade 8 to higher levels are also lower. School districts receive funding annually to support Aboriginal education programming at the school level.

Safe Schools

During 1999/2000, the Ministry of Education continued its partnership with the Ministry of Attorney General, committing funding to the internationally recognized Safe Schools Initiative, including the operation of the Safe Schools Centre and a number of other proactive efforts to promote safety for BC's students. These included providing relevant information, resources, and training for educators, students, and parents. The ministry continued to expand the Effective Behaviour Support (EBS) and bully prevention training to support schools in addressing school behaviour issues, and carried out a formal evaluation to confirm the effectiveness of the EBS training. During this school year the Auditor General of British Columbia conducted a review of the safety of BC's public schools and published a report that commented positively on their safety, while making recommendations to be addressed in subsequent school years.

Accountability and Assessing Performance

Annual reporting is required at each level of the BC school system for accountability and assessment purposes. Schools, districts and the ministry produce annual reports of performance. School annual reports are tied in to the six-year school accreditation cycle. District and provincial annual reports outline how programs and policies at different levels have impacted and improved student performance and outcomes as measured by such things as student assessments, provincial exams and transition to further studies.

A new province-wide **Foundation Skills Assessment** of basic skills was administered to all Grades 4, 7 and 10 students in 1998/1999. In the 1999/2000 FSA, results were made available to individual students and schools. The FSA provides a snapshot of how well public and independent school students are doing in reading, writing, and numeracy.

Provincial examinations provide a means of assessing Grade 12 student performance in 21 subject areas. In 1999/2000, more than 61,000 students wrote over 161,000 provincial examinations.

All public schools in BC take part in the **Accreditation Program**. It has a six-year cycle and is designed to ensure that schools are continually improving. Every six years, parents, educators and students evaluate how their school has performed in relation to 33 objectives, and develop a growth plan that guides progress toward specific improvements. An evaluation of the program conducted last year indicated strong support for accreditation, and concerns about workload. The program has since been modified to reduce workload.

Provincial Performance Standards for reading, writing, numeracy, and social responsibility were developed with the help of teacher groups across the province. These resources, the first of their kind in Canada, give clear examples of what work looks like when students meet, exceed or fall below expectations for their grade level. The standards are intended to help classroom teachers evaluate students, identify those who may benefit from intervention, and encourage discussion with parents and other teachers about student performance.

British Columbia also participates in a number of national and international assessments of system performance. The **School Achievement Indicators Program** is a national assessment in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. The **Third International Mathematics and Science Study** is an international assessment of student achievement in mathematics and science.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

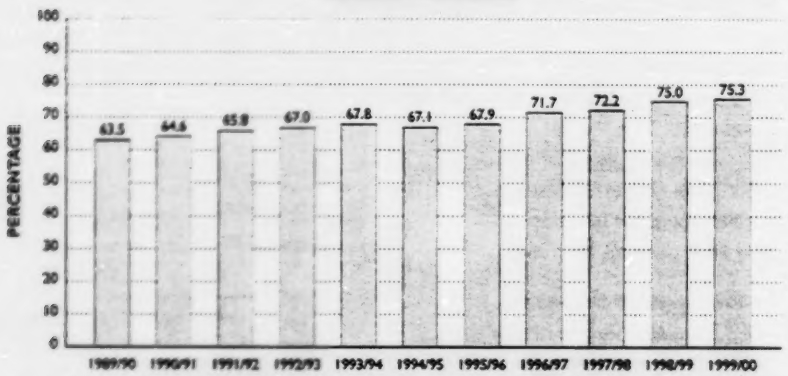
Completion

A Grade 12 education is necessary for a career in almost any field today. For most students, secondary school completion is not the end of their formal education, but an important step leading to further education or training. The skills and knowledge learned in secondary school are also important in developing the students' sense of self and their ability to participate as contributing members of society.

- ***The percentage of BC youths completing secondary school increased in 1999/2000.***

The proportion of Grade 8 students who completed their secondary school education within six years by receiving a Dogwood Diploma was 75.3 percent in 1999/2000, three tenths of a percent higher than in the previous year. This continues a long-term trend of improvement by over 10 percentage points over the last 10 years.

BC SCHOOL COMPLETION RATES, 1989/90 – 1999/2000



Note: Starting with the 1996/97 school year, completions were calculated using the tracking-based Dogwood completion rate. Completions for years prior to 1996/97 were calculated using the population-based Dogwood completion rate (see Glossary for definitions). Completions up to 1995/96 may not match figures in previous annual reports because of revised Statistics Canada population estimates, and reconciliation of differences between the tracking-based method and the population-based method. As such, the population-based method can be considered to be an approximation of the tracking-based method. These figures include public and independent schools.

Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

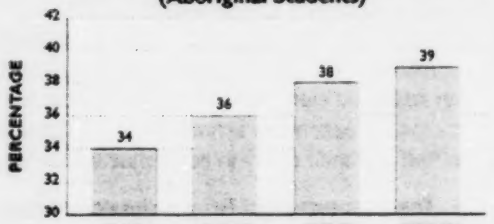
- ***Female students are more likely to complete high school than males.***

The Dogwood completion rate for males remained below that for females. Only 70.9 percent of the male students who started Grade 8 in 1994 achieved a Dogwood Diploma by 1999/2000, compared with 80.1 percent of female students. This difference has remained fairly constant for the past decade.

- ***The completion rate for Aboriginal students is around half the provincial average.***

The school completion rate for Aboriginal students has been steadily increasing although it is still much lower than the provincial average. Only 39 percent of Aboriginal students entering Grade 8 in 1994 completed high school by 1999/2000 compared with 78.1 percent of their non-Aboriginal counterparts. However, this was a significant improvement over Aboriginal students entering Grade 8 three years earlier.

DOGWOOD COMPLETIONS, 1996/97 – 1999/2000 (Aboriginal Students)

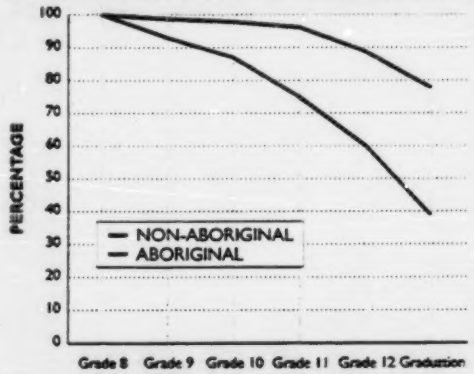


Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

As with non-Aboriginal students, Aboriginal females completed high school at a higher rate than males. Of Aboriginal students who entered Grade 8 in 1994, 42.5 percent of females and 35.6 percent of males completed. The corresponding rates for non-Aboriginal students were 83.0 percent for females and 74.4 percent for males.

Grade-by-grade transition rates from Grade 8 to higher grade levels were also lower for Aboriginal than non-Aboriginal students.

TRANSITION AND DOGWOOD COMPLETION RATES FOR ABORIGINAL AND NON-ABORIGINAL STUDENTS WHO STARTED GRADE 8 IN 1994/95



Note: Rates shown above are based on tracking the 1994/95 Grade 8 cohorts forward to the end of 1999/2000. This provides each cohort with an additional year for reaching Grade 12 and completion. These figures include public and independent schools.

Source: Student Assessment and Program Evaluation Branch

- ***More Aboriginal students are reported in several categories of students with special needs.***

In special education, Aboriginal students were represented in higher proportions than non-Aboriginal students. In 1999/2000, Aboriginal students were more than four times as likely to be reported to the ministry in the "severe behaviour" category. The reasons for this are complex. They may be due to administrative convenience, teacher perceptions, cross-cultural misinterpretations, inappropriate assessment tools, preventable medical conditions, or insufficient involvement of families. Plans were initiated in 2000 to further study this over-representation.

- ***Students with special needs have access to a range of programs to support their performance.***

Special education enrolment has increased by almost 70 percent over the past decade. Most students with special needs are included in regular classrooms with supports to enable them to access the prescribed curriculum. Accommodations such as special equipment, adapted instructional or assessment approaches, or additional time to master the outcomes enable most of them to succeed. In other cases, students with special needs required significant modifications to their education programs to meet their abilities and needs.

The capacity to analyze student outcomes for different categories of students with special needs is beginning to provide baseline information for monitoring improvement in their performance. In 1999/2000, the ministry began to use student level data for measures of student success such as provincial exams. This information can now be the basis for improvement in performance within certain categories of students with special needs. Traditional measures of student success are not appropriate for all categories of students.

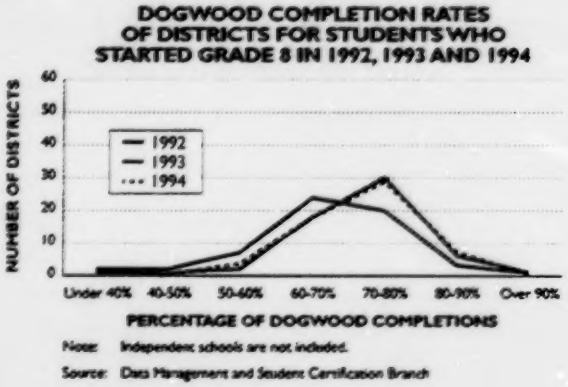
1999/2000 GRADE 12 STUDENTS ENROLLED AND DOGWOOD DIPLOMAS RECEIVED, BY SPECIAL EDUCATION CATEGORY

DISABILITY CATEGORY	NUMBER OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN GRADE 12	NUMBER OF DOGWOODS RECEIVED IN 1999/2000	PERCENTAGE OF DOGWOODS RECEIVED IN 1999/2000
Physically Dependent	41	0	0%
Moderate to Severe/Profound Intellectual Disability	143	3	2%
Mild Intellectual Disability	271	52	19%
Autism	32	8	25%
Behaviour Disorder - Rehabilitation	529	162	31%
Behaviour Disorder - Moderate	372	121	33%
Severe Behaviour	220	75	34%
Physical Disabilities or Chronic Health Impairments	157	81	52%
Severe Learning Disability	1194	706	59%
Deaf or Hard of Hearing	82	52	63%
Visual Impairments	36	24	67%
Gifted	2662	2520	95%
All Public Schools	49940	37765	76%

Source: Information Management Branch and Special Programs Branch

* ***Regional differences in completion rates remain, but there are improved results in some districts.***

Completion rates vary because of factors like urbanization, community wealth, parental education, and the ability of districts to meet local needs. More than 60 percent of districts showed a completion rate of 70 percent or more in 1998/1999 and in 1999/2000.



Analysis

The Dogwood completion rate for female students is generally about 10 percent higher than the rate for male students. Ways must be found to increase the performance level of male students in the education system.

The Dogwood completion rate for Aboriginal students has improved from 34 percent in 1996/1997 to 39 percent in 1999/2000. Although there has been improvement in the overall performance of Aboriginal students, it is still markedly lower than all other student performance. Continued attention to Aboriginal student outcomes will be required in order that these students approach parity with other students.

Of nearly 1200 Grade 12 students with Severe Learning Disabilities, almost 60 percent received Dogwood diplomas compared with the provincial average of 76 percent of Grade 12 enrolment. Well over 60 percent of Hearing and Visually Impaired students received Dogwood diplomas in 1999.

In summary, there have been improvements in the effectiveness of the school system overall but there are still large differences in completion rates among subgroups of students.

Transition

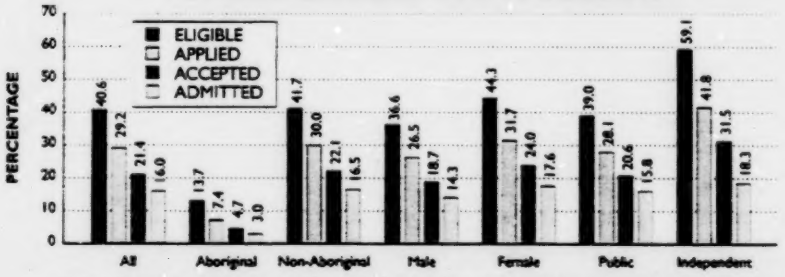
- ***Ministry policy and programs recognize and accommodate a wider range of learning sources.***

Students earn the majority of credits required for Dogwood completion within the K-12 school system. However, they may also earn credits for learning acquired in other ways. External Courses, which began in 1995, recognizes learning acquired outside the regular classroom setting and provides another way for Grade 11 and 12 students to receive credit towards Dogwood completion. The ministry has approved around 350 External Courses in areas such as music, sport, speech and drama, and youth development. In some cases, students can earn dual credits that count toward high school completion and first year college studies.

- ***Many students pursue some form of post-secondary education or training within a few years of completion.***

The chart below shows university eligibility and direct transition from secondary school to BC universities for 1998/99 graduates. Transition is considered to be "direct" in that these students were applying to university for the fall season immediately following completion of secondary school. No data are available for students who did not apply directly. Similar figures for BC colleges, university colleges and other post-secondary institutions are not available.

UNIVERSITY ELIGIBILITY AND DIRECT ADMISSION FOR 1998/99 SECONDARY SCHOOL GRADUATES



Note: Percentages reported here include public and independent school students, as well as adult students. Entrance data used in the chart were jointly developed by the Ministry of Education and the institutional research offices of the four provincial universities. Eligibility was derived from student transcript information. Eligibility rates for Aboriginal students are based on students who ever reported being Aboriginal in any year of their studies.

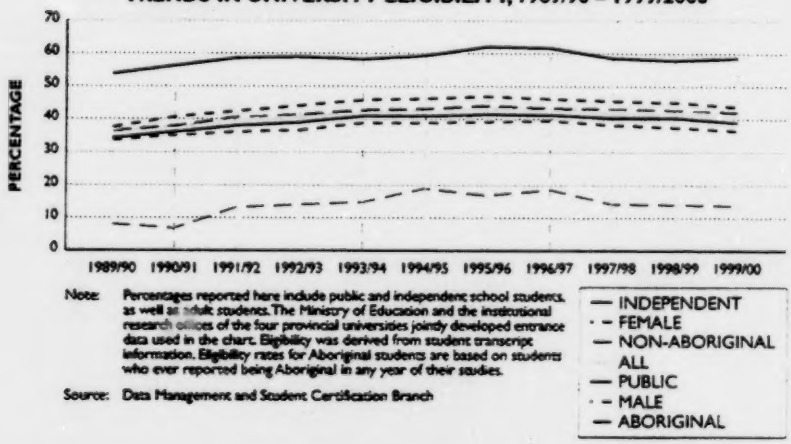
Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

- ***Trends in university eligibility and attendance among different groups of students are relatively stable, but obvious differences persist.***

In 1998/1999, 17.6 percent of female students were admitted to university directly after completing high school, compared with 14.3 percent of males. Only 7.4 percent of Aboriginal students applied to university, compared with the non-Aboriginal rate of just over 29 percent. Ultimately, three percent of Aboriginal students were admitted to a university directly upon completion. Fewer Aboriginal students than non-Aboriginal students make the transition to other post-secondary studies or employment. The same is true of students with disabilities.

While levels of eligibility (see Glossary for definition of University Eligibility) for any specific group of students may change from year to year, differences among student groups remain relatively unchanged. Differences in university admittance among student groups has also been generally very consistent. Students from independent schools are an exception. In the last year, their rates of transition to university have decreased proportionately, and relative to other student groups.

TRENDS IN UNIVERSITY ELIGIBILITY, 1989/90 – 1999/2000



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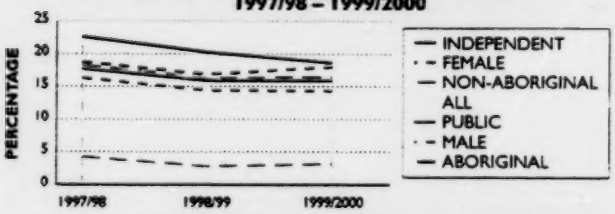
Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

TRENDS IN UNIVERSITY ADMITTANCE, 1997/98 – 1999/2000



Note: Percentages reported here include public school, independent school and adult students. The Ministry of Education and the institutional research offices of the four provincial universities jointly developed entrance data for this chart. Eligibility is derived from student transcripts, and rates for Aboriginal students include those ever reporting being Aboriginal in any year of their studies.

Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

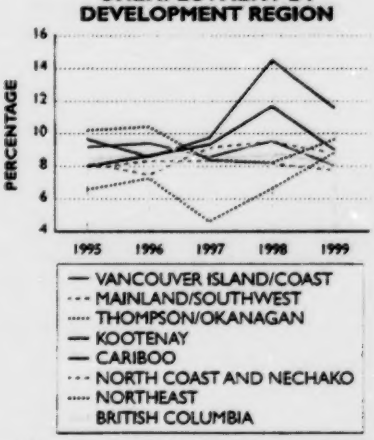
- ***University eligibility varies by region, reflecting the difficulties faced by students residing in outlying regions.***

Overall, public school graduates have a 39 percent university eligibility rate. Greater Vancouver school districts have the highest average with West Vancouver over 68 percent, Vancouver at 55 percent, Burnaby and Richmond at 53 percent, and North Vancouver at 52 percent. Rural school districts have the lowest university eligibility rates; for example, Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlottes at 18 percent, Stikine at 17 percent, Gold Trail at 12 percent, and Nisga'a at 4 percent.

- ***In general, the best employment opportunities in BC are closer to large urban centres.***

The Mainland/Southwest and the Northeast regions of BC generally have the lowest levels of unemployment. The density of population in the Mainland/ Southwest is far greater than other development regions. This region employs roughly 36 percent of the BC population aged 15 years and older (about 60 percent of the total BC labour force).

UNEMPLOYMENT BY DEVELOPMENT REGION

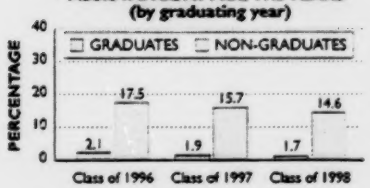


Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force survey (Annual Averages) produced by: BC Stats, March, 2000

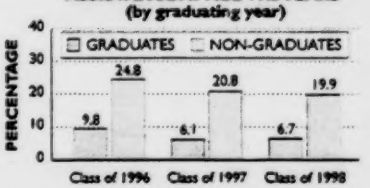
- ***The percentage of youth receiving Income Assistance after leaving school has been decreasing.***

In general, fewer youth have been receiving Income Assistance over the last few years.[2] This may result from efforts to tighten eligibility criteria or the introduction of Youth Works, an entitlement training program for all youths 19-24 eligible for Income Assistance. It may also reflect fluctuations in the economy. Certain groups, such as Aboriginal and female students, are much more likely to require Income Assistance than are others.

PERCENTAGE OF HIGH SCHOOL CLASS ON INCOME ASSISTANCE AT AGE 19.5 YEARS (by graduating year)



PERCENTAGE OF ABORIGINAL HIGH SCHOOL CLASS ON INCOME ASSISTANCE AT AGE 19.5 YEARS (by graduating year)



Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch, Ministry of Education; and Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security

[2] To produce these figures, data from the Ministry of Education were linked to data from the Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security, representing records of over 133,000 students.

Eligibility criteria for both employment benefits and Income Assistance have tightened in recent years. This increases the importance of ensuring that students move successfully from schooling to employment or further education. Young people have also been experiencing record unemployment levels in recent years, even during periods of economic growth. With the recent economic downturn, issues of transition to the labour market may become more critical for current graduates.

Analysis

Ministry policy formally recognizes and grants credit for many forms of learning occurring outside the classroom. This has enabled more students to complete high school. However, the percentage of students transferring directly to university is still far below the number of eligible graduates. The reasons for this are unclear. It may be due to economics or limited availability of seats in universities. It should be kept in mind that the university transition figures shown are from limited available transition data, and that they represent only four BC universities. Students may also transfer directly to other post-secondary education such as colleges and technical institutes. The ministry continues to collaborate with other post-secondary institutions to facilitate transition through articulation agreements, Career and Technical Centres, and other initiatives.

The available data on university transitions also suggest that long-standing differences in transition rates for different groups of students persist. Fewer males than females make the direct transition to BC universities, and this pattern is much more pronounced for Aboriginal students.

There have been several efforts to improve schools as a learning environment for Aboriginal students through such initiatives as Improvement Agreements with school districts, targeted funding, First Nations Studies 12, and the hiring of First Nations education co-ordinators. These efforts should continue, along with efforts to improve learning outcomes for boys. Also, more Aboriginal students and students with disabilities need to transfer successfully to post-secondary education.

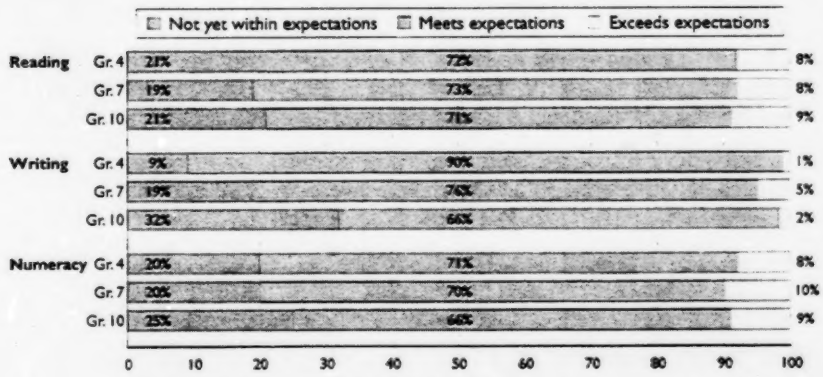
Developing Core Skills

Helping students acquire the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy is a key function of the K-12 school system. To measure how well students are developing these skills the Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA) was conducted in 1999/2000. The FSA measures the reading comprehension, writing, and numeracy skills of Grade 4, 7 and 10 students in all public and publicly funded independent schools in BC. The standards of performance used in the assessment were set by a panel of Grade 4, 7 and 10 educators, and are closely aligned with the expected Integrated Resource Package (IRP) Learning Outcomes. Similar assessments were administered in previous years but groundwork to ensure valid comparability of scores between years is only now considered complete for the assessments of reading comprehension and numeracy. In 2001, this groundwork should be completed for the writing component.

- ***Most students are performing at a satisfactory level and some are exceeding expectations.***

Overall, between 68 and 91 percent of students met or exceeded performance standards for their grade level. Between one and 10 percent exceeded expectations.

FOUNDATION SKILLS ASSESSMENT RESULTS, 1999/2000*



Source: Student Assessment and Program Evaluation Branch

In the reading comprehension component, girls did better than boys at all grades, with the performance of boys becoming considerably lower at higher grades. Performance by Aboriginal students was still lower. Again, in the writing component girls performed better than boys did and the performance of Aboriginal students was low. In the numeracy component the results were about the same for boys and girls. Aboriginal students again showed considerably lower results. Students in the English as a Second Language (ESL) program showed slightly stronger results than average. These results are consistent with past provincial, national, and international assessments.

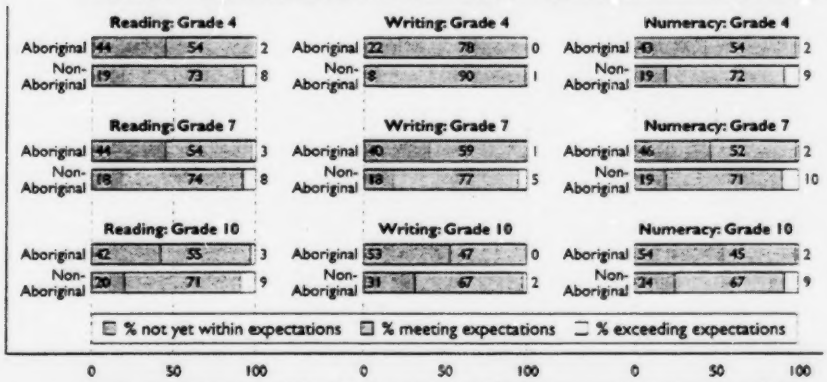
* Totals may not always equal 100 percent in this or other graphics because of rounding.

COMPARISON OF MALE AND FEMALE STUDENTS MEETING OR EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS: 1999/2000 READING COMPREHENSION, WRITING, AND NUMERACY

	READING PERCENTAGES		WRITING PERCENTAGES		NUMERACY PERCENTAGES	
	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS	GIRLS	BOYS
Grade 4	83	76	95	87	78	81
Grade 7	84	78	88	74	80	79
Grade 10	85	74	77	60	73	76

Source: Student Assessment and Program Evaluation Branch

COMPARISON OF ABORIGINAL AND NON-ABORIGINAL STUDENTS: FOUNDATION SKILLS ASSESSMENT 1999/2000 READING COMPREHENSION, FIRST DRAFT WRITING, AND NUMERACY



Source: Student Assessment and Program Evaluation Branch, and Data Management and Student Certification Branch

English as a Second Language (ESL) Students

Currently enrolled ESL students scored lower than average in reading comprehension and in Grade 4 numeracy. Performance in writing was about average in grades 4 and 7, but lower in Grade 10. However, students currently enrolled in ESL programs did better than average in Grades 7 and 10 numeracy.

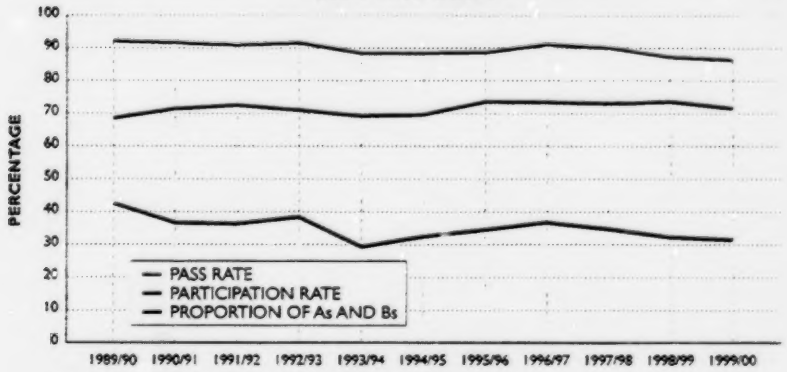
Students from Different Regions

Overall, the Foundation Skills Assessment indicates strong differences in performance by region, with rural areas tending to perform less well than urban areas. The extremes of difference between top- and bottom-performing regions are more pronounced for higher grades.

- ***Grade 12 provincial exam results suggest that students are developing their literacy and numeracy skills to a satisfactory level or better.***

To meet graduation requirements in language arts, students select one of various courses including Communications 12, Français langue première 12, Français langue seconde 12, English 12, or Technical and Professional Communications 12. Most students choose English 12, which in 1999/2000 had a participation rate of 72 percent, down from 74 percent last year. The 1999/2000 pass rate was 87 percent, with 32 percent of those writing the exam receiving an A or B.

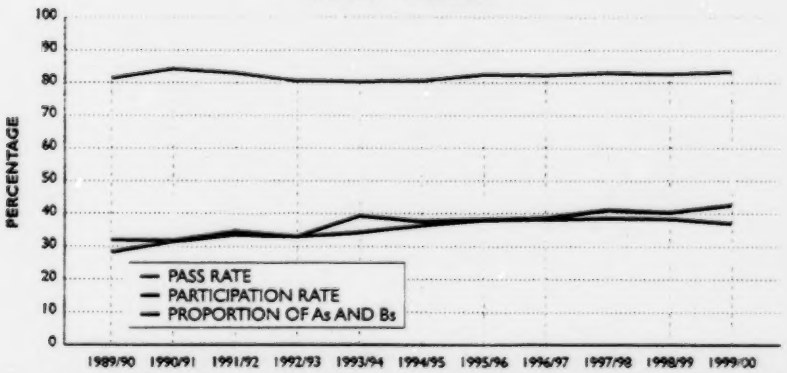
ENGLISH 12 EXAMINATION TRENDS, 1989/90 – 1999/2000



Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

Participation in Mathematics 12 has decreased from 38 percent to 37 percent since last year, but the pass rate of 83 percent is stable; 42 percent of students earned an A or B.

MATHEMATICS 12 EXAMINATION TRENDS, 1989/90 – 1999/2000



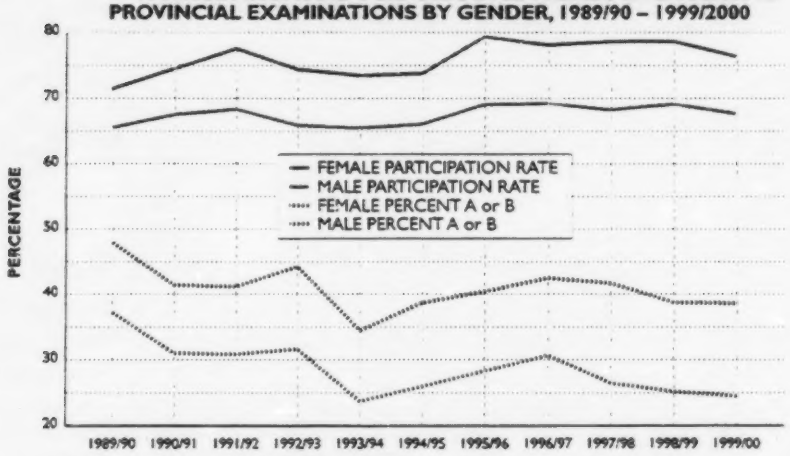
Note: Mathematics 12 course curriculum is regularly updated. In order to present 10 year trends, this chart provides data from Algebra 12 and from Principles of Mathematics 12 (which replaced Algebra 12 in 1990/91). Data for 1989/90 are from Algebra 12. Data for 1990/91 are from a weighted combination of data for Algebra 12 and principles of Mathematics 12. Data for 1991/92 to the present are from Principles of Mathematics 12. To represent this combination of the old and new course grades, the term "Mathematics 12" is used.

Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

- ***Female students are more successful than males.***

Females have done better than males in English 12 for over ten years. In 1999/2000, 90 percent of females passed the exam compared with 83 percent of males. More significantly, females outnumber males in taking English 12 (76 percent and 68 percent respectively), while males outnumber females in Communications 12 (15 percent and eight percent respectively). As English 12 is a requirement for admission to many post-secondary studies, and Communications 12 is not, more females than males are eligible for some further education options.

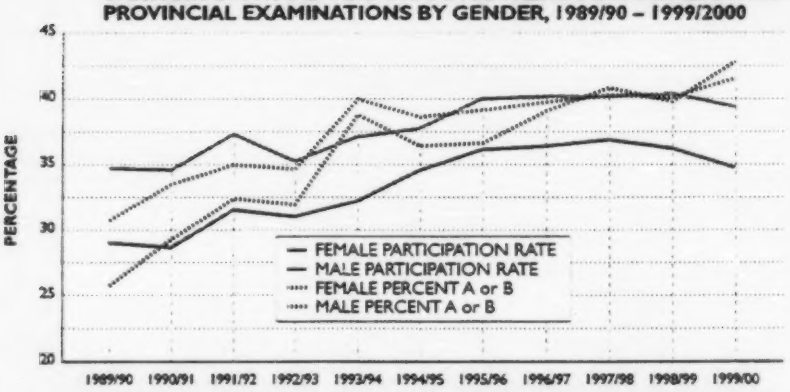
PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE TRENDS IN ENGLISH 12
PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS BY GENDER, 1989/90 – 1999/2000



Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

Male participation in Mathematics 12 has exceeded female participation by a small margin for over ten years. In 1999/2000 about 39 percent of male students took this course compared with about 35 percent of females. The historical pattern of

PARTICIPATION AND PERFORMANCE TRENDS IN MATHEMATICS 12
PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS BY GENDER, 1989/90 – 1999/2000



Note: Data for 1989/90 are from Algebra 12. Data for 1990/91 are from a weighted combination of Algebra 12 and Principles of Mathematics 12. Data for 1991/92 to the present are from Principles of Mathematics 12.

Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

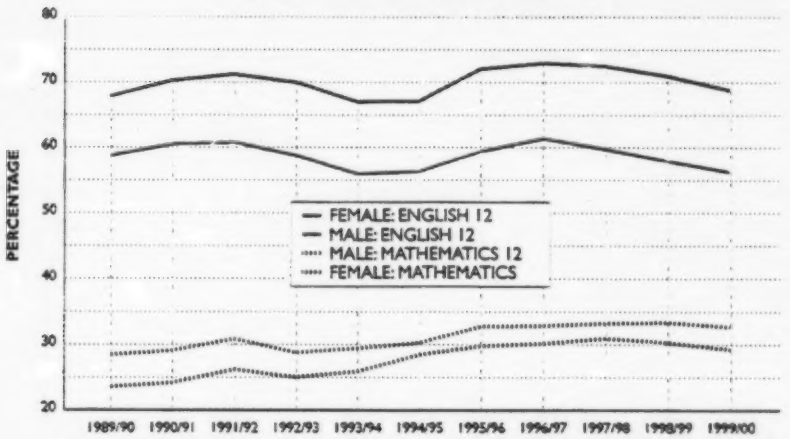
males receiving higher marks in Mathematics 12 has disappeared. Within the past few years equal proportions (about 40 percent) of males and females have received an A or B on their exam, and in 1999/2000 a slightly higher percentage of females than males received an A or B on their exam.

Trends in English 12 and Mathematics 12 provincial exams are very stable. There has been a small increase in participation in the English 12 exam up to 1995/96, followed by stability and a recent small decrease. The percentage of A and B grades in English 12 has decreased marginally. More remarkable is that the gap between males and females remains constant. On average, male participation is about nine percent lower than female participation and 12 percent fewer males receive A or B grades. Participation and success in the English 12 exam is a major obstacle to equalizing levels of eligibility for university between male and female students.

In comparison, female and male participation levels in the Mathematics 12 exam are close to equal, with female participation just slightly lower. Female participation was increasing until 1997/98, but has decreased slightly since then. Male participation was also increasing until 1998/99, but has decreased slightly this year.

Although levels of participation in the Mathematics 12 exam are closer to equal for males and females (on average, the difference is about five percent), they are much lower than levels of participation in the English 12 exam. With just slightly more than one third of students participating, the Mathematics 12 exam is also an obstacle to university eligibility for both males and females. In recent years, the percentage of A's and B's has been rising. Female performance has been rising

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN ENGLISH 12 AND/OR MATHEMATICS 12 AND PASSED THE PROVINCIAL EXAM, BY GENDER, 1989/90 – 1999/2000



Note: All distance education schools, continuing education centres and Yukon schools have been excluded. All public and independent schools are included. These numbers differ from previously published numbers due to refinements in methodology.

Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

faster, surpassing male performance in the last few years. However, participation has been decreasing for all students in the last few years, and female participation remains lower than male participation.

Participation in other examinable courses

The school system promotes and supports general student development through a broad range of course offerings. Many of the other examinable courses reflect BC's growing cultural diversity and support development of the scientific skills required for the growing knowledge-based economy. Graduating students are required to attain standing in Language Arts 12, which is usually met through English 12. All other examinable courses could be considered optional for graduation purposes.

Generally, female participation rates in language courses are higher than male participation rates. Participation in French 12 has been slowly declining over the last six years, while participation in other languages (German, Japanese, Mandarin, and Spanish) has increased slightly. This may be a reflection of the increasingly multicultural character of the population of BC.

In the sciences, male participation in Biology 12 has been stable while female participation has risen to nearly double the male participation rate. Participation in Chemistry 12 is fairly equally balanced by gender, while in Physics 12 males have participated at about twice the rate of females for the past six years.

In the provincial exams for languages, attainment of A or B grades is fairly evenly balanced between males and females, but females have tended to perform marginally better than males in Japanese 12, Mandarin 12, and Spanish 12.

Attainment of A or B grades is also fairly evenly balanced between males and females in provincial exams for sciences, but female performance in Physics 12 has been slowly improving over the last six years, exceeding males for the last five.

In Geography and History, males tend to outperform females by a small margin.

- ***Females outnumber males in earning provincial scholarships and district awards.***

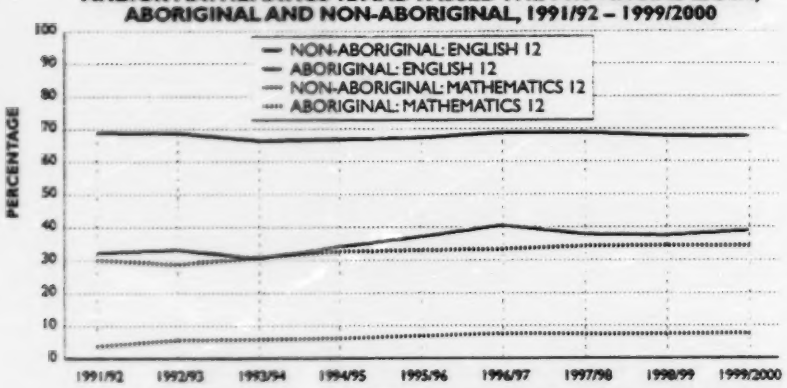
Of the 40,941 students completing Grade 12 with a Dogwood Certificate in 1999/2000, 2,361 females received a provincial scholarship or a district award, compared with 1,860 males. This difference in performance has been a trend for several years.

- ***Participation and success in provincial exams vary among student groups.***

In a number of subjects, some groups participate at a lesser rate or perform at a lower level than the overall student population. These groups include boys, ESL students, and Aboriginal students.

Although participation has been improving measurably in recent years, a much lower proportion of Aboriginal students than non-Aboriginal students write the English 12 exam (about 59 percent of the non-Aboriginal rate in 1999/2000). However, their pass rate is only slightly lower than that of non-Aboriginal students (about 3 percent lower in 1999/2000). Aboriginal students' participation in Mathematics 12 is also low – only about 24 percent of the non-Aboriginal rate. Pass rates are also lower. On average, 73 percent fewer Aboriginal students passed than their non-Aboriginal counterparts in 1999/2000. However, Mathematics 12 scores of Aboriginal students are increasing relative to non-Aboriginal students.

PROPORTION OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN ENGLISH 12 AND/OR MATHEMATICS 12 AND PASSED THE PROVINCIAL EXAM, ABORIGINAL AND NON-ABORIGINAL, 1991/92 – 1999/2000



Note: All distance education schools, continuing education centres and Yukon schools have been excluded. All public and independent schools are included. These numbers differ from previously published numbers due to refinements in methodology.

Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

Providing support and ensuring access to the school system can assist students with disabilities in performing at the level of other students.

Exam conditions may be adapted if a student faces unpredictable circumstances or has special needs. Students eligible for adaptations or "adjudication" include those with physical, learning, or intellectual disabilities; visual impairments; hearing impairments or deafness; emotional/behavioural disorders; and autism. Eligible students may be allowed more time, provided with an adapted examination (Braille, large print, audio); or be permitted an alternative means of recording (computers, Braille-writers, tape recorders, use of scribes). Most adjudications are for students with learning disabilities that can range from mild to severe; generally, the request is for additional time to write the exam. During the 1999/2000 school year, 1,511 adjudications were requested; only 66 were rejected.

1999/2000 ADJUDICATED PROVINCIAL EXAMINATIONS: RESULTS BY SPECIAL EDUCATION CATEGORY

SPECIAL EDUCATION CATEGORY	COMMUNICATION 12 SCORE	ENGLISH 12 SCORE	MATH 12 SCORE
Emotional/behavioural disability	72 %	64 %	66 %
Hearing loss	56 %	61 %	47 %
Illness and accident	76 %	51 %	40 %
Intellectual disability	59 %	59 %	N/A
Learning disability	66 %	61 %	63 %
Physical disability	71 %	65 %	67 %
Visual impairment	74 %	65 %	59 %
Provincial average exam score	**67%**	**66%**	**68%**

Source: Special Programs Branch and Data Management and Student Certification Branch

- ***For students experiencing learning difficulties, timely effective intervention can help them return to regular studies without being categorized as students with special needs.***

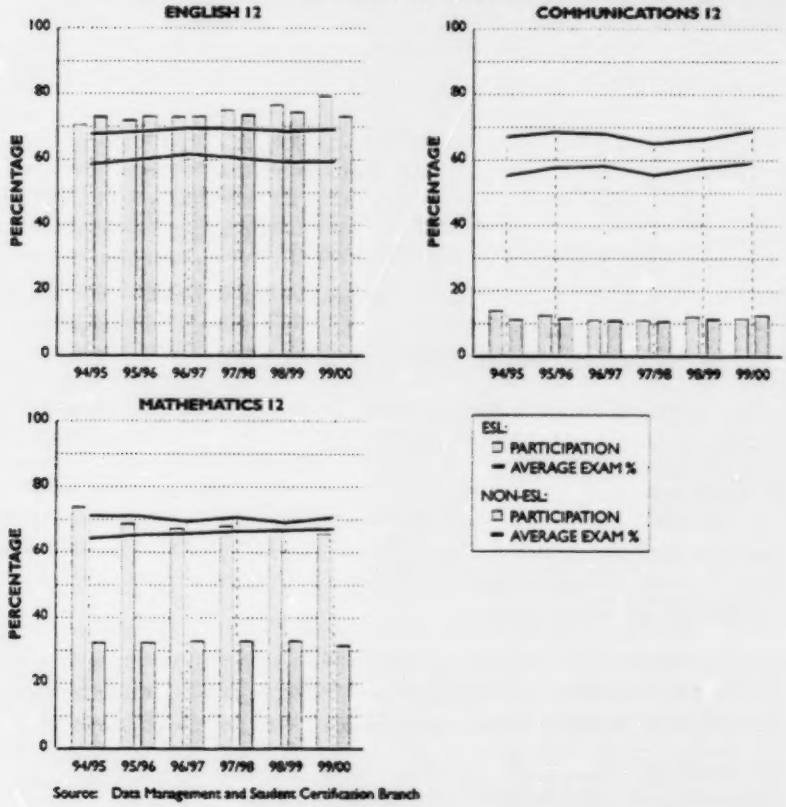
Many disabilities are long term or permanent; however, other learning difficulties may be temporary if students receive effective interventions early. Students with these difficulties are frequently supported by Learning Assistance, a non-categorical special education service. Currently no measure is available to report on the use of remedial programs.

One of the concerns examined by the ministry-appointed Special Education review team in 1999/2000 was whether there was over-reliance on specialized remedial services for students who may be experiencing difficulty but do not have special needs. As a result, one of the recommendations from the review, to be implemented in the next three years, directs boards to focus on more effective early classroom assessment and classroom intervention for students with such learning difficulties.

- ***Scores for ESL students have been relatively stable while their participation rates have been changing.***

Participation by ESL students in English 12 has increased slightly, while participation levels in Communications 12 and Mathematics 12 have fallen slightly. Despite a slight drop in Mathematics 12 participation, ESL students still participate at more than double the rate of non-ESL students.

PARTICIPATION RATES IN ENGLISH 12, COMMUNICATONS 12 AND MATHEMATICS 12 EXAMINATIONS BY ESL STATUS (IN PERCENTAGES), 1994/95 – 1999/2000



Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

- ***The proportion of students who pass exams varies regionally, reflecting differences in student populations.***

Of BC public and independent school students who wrote the English 12 exam in 1999/2000, 86.9 percent passed. The pass rate was lower in many school districts in metropolitan Vancouver, where the diverse population includes higher concentrations of ESL and adult students. Some of the highest pass rates occurred in less densely populated, more isolated school districts.

For Mathematics 12, the pass rate was 83.4 percent. Northern or more isolated school districts were less likely to exceed the provincial average. Roughly 60 percent of the Mathematics 12 examinations were written in the lower mainland/ Vancouver area, where the pass rates tended to be higher than average. Many smaller districts also had above average success.

- ***BC students perform well on national and international assessments.***

British Columbia participates in a number of national and international assessments to help determine how its education system performs in relation to education systems nationally and internationally.

The second round of the School Achievement Indicators Program is a national assessment in reading, writing, mathematics, and science administered to 13- and 16-year-olds on a near-annual basis. In 1999, a sample of BC students participated in the science assessment. In both age groups, British Columbia's students performed as well as or better than Canadian students as a whole.

When compared with other provinces or territories, only one other province (Alberta) statistically exceeded both age groups in BC.

The Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), an assessment designed to answer questions about student achievement in mathematics and science internationally, was administered in spring 1999.

The average performance of BC students in both mathematics and science was significantly higher than the international averages and not significantly different from the Canadian averages.

In both mathematics and science, BC students had significantly higher scores than students from more than half of participant countries, including the United States, New Zealand, Italy, and Israel. Only Taiwan and Singapore had significantly higher scores than BC in both subjects.

Quebec was the only province with mathematics scores that were significantly higher than those for BC. Alberta was the only province with science scores that were significantly higher than those for BC.

BC results on the mathematics and science components of the 1999 TIMSS were not significantly different from the first round of TIMSS conducted in 1995.

Analysis

Comparison of FSA performance across years is not possible due to changes to the test instrument. Therefore, increases or decreases in previous trends cannot be discussed.

Girls outperform boys in reading comprehension and writing, and are about the same in numeracy. Females also perform better in the English 12 provincial examination, which gives them more options for further education. Females also tend to win more scholarships and awards, providing them with a financial incentive and advantage to continue with further education. Differences between male and female participation and performance in Mathematics 12 are diminishing over time, but overall participation is still much lower than for English 12, which presents a major barrier to eligibility for post-secondary studies. Efforts should be made to increase male participation and success in English 12, and overall participation and success in Mathematics 12.

Aboriginal students experience much lower pass rates than non-Aboriginal students in both the FSA and provincial exams. Participation rates in provincial exams are also much lower, presenting a major barrier to transition to post-secondary education. However, the performance of Aboriginal students in provincial exams has been improving at a faster rate than the performance of non-Aboriginal students. Continued attention to Aboriginal student outcomes will have to be maintained for some time in order for Aboriginal students to approach parity with other students.

Special education policy is assisting students with special needs to participate more meaningfully in education. Students who might never have graduated in a traditional setting are now completing school better prepared to participate meaningfully in their communities.

ESL students scored lower than average in FSA reading comprehension and above average in numeracy. However, participation rates in the English 12 provincial exam are now higher for ESL students than non-ESL students. Average exam scores remain about 10 percent below those for non-ESL students. Furthermore, ESL student participation rates in the Mathematics 12 provincial exam are still roughly double that of non-ESL students and their average scores remain a little higher.

With some exceptions, large urban areas tend to perform better on the FSA than rural areas. Northern and more isolated districts are also less likely to exceed the provincial average pass rate on exams, which means that students from these regions are less likely to be eligible for post-secondary education. However, there are many rural districts that perform above the provincial average. This may suggest that attempts (such as PLNet) to improve access to education are helping, but that differences persist in isolated northern districts where more barriers exist.

It appears that improved inclusion of students with special needs has not had a negative impact on student performance overall and BC students continue to perform well on national and international assessments.

Citizenship/Social Responsibility

Citizenship and social responsibility include the knowledge, attitudes and contributions associated with improving the quality of life for all members of society. Young people demonstrate good citizenship when they respect themselves and others, work together to contribute to the community, and appreciate and respect the environment.

- ***Tolerance for diversity and the ability to work with others are important social skills for the provision of a safe and accessible learning environment for all students. In general, parents are satisfied with school performance in developing these areas.***

Parents who provided in the satisfaction ratings during the 1999/2000 accreditation process were generally satisfied with how schools were developing students' tolerance and respect for the ideas and beliefs of others (77 percent satisfied or very satisfied); sense of social responsibility (81 percent satisfied or very satisfied) developing students' co-operative and team skills (86 percent satisfied or very satisfied); and providing a safe and accessible learning environment for all students (74 percent satisfied or very satisfied).

A public survey administered in March 2000[3] indicated that 63 percent of the BC public felt that schools should teach students about both traditional and non-traditional families, while 28 percent felt that schools should not teach about non-traditional families because of these respondents' belief that only the traditional family is legitimate. Fifty-four percent believed that the government should provide money for ESL training to integrate children from other cultures into BC society, while 40 percent believed that it is the responsibility of parents moving into the province and that the government should not provide funding.

- ***Teen pregnancy rates and criminal charge rates are declining.***

Teen pregnancy statistics are one indicator of socially responsible behaviour. Data compiled from various independent sources show the pregnancy rate for girls aged 15 to 19 has fluctuated between 4.0 and 5.2 percent for the past decade. There has been a gradual downward trend since 1994/95, consistent with the trends noted above, which may be cause for cautious optimism. The most recently available data is for the 1998/99 year, but trends in live births and stillbirths for British Columbia since 1998/99 (two components of this indicator) suggest that percentages of teen pregnancies are continuing to fall.

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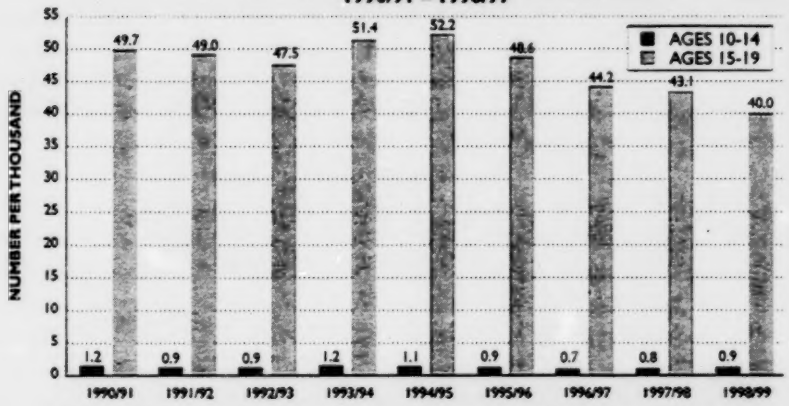
[3] The survey was based on a random sample of BC residents. Telephone interviews of 800 participants were conducted from March 1 to March 20, 2000. A survey this size has a confidence level of ± 3 percent, 19 times out of 20.

YOUTH PREGNANCY RATES (per 1000 population), 1990/91 – 1998/99

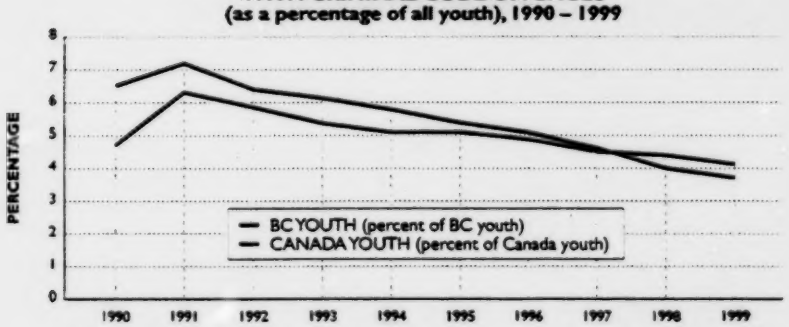


Note: Pregnancy rates shown are the average number of pregnancies per 1,000 females in the specified age group.

Sources: Live births and stillbirths from BC Vital Statistics Agency, BC Ministry of Health; abortions and miscarriages from Information and Analysis Branch, BC Ministry of Health; population data from BC Stats, BC Ministry of Finance and Corporate Relations; data prepared by BC Vital Statistics Agency, BC Ministry of Health

The number of British Columbians aged 12 to 17 charged with offences under the Criminal Code has been declining since 1991. In that time, the charge rate has fallen from 7.2 percent of youth to 3.7 percent in 1999, for a total of 11,703 youth charged. For the past two years, the BC charge rate has been below the national rate.

BC YOUTH AND CANADA YOUTH CHARGED WITH CRIMINAL CODE OFFENCES (as a percentage of all youth), 1990 – 1999

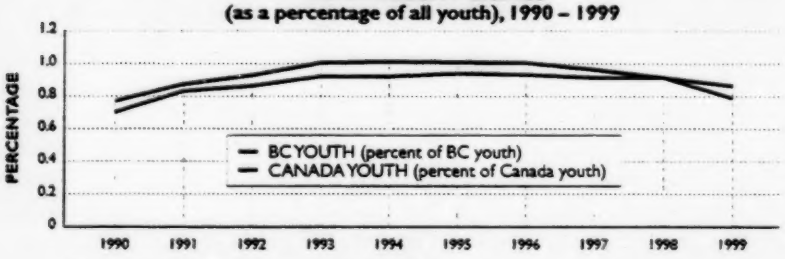


Source: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, and BC Stats

While the number of BC youth charged with violent offences rose 65 percent between 1990 and 1996 (from 1927 charges to 3171), there has been some decline over the past three years (2513 charges in 1999). This evidence is supported by Statistics Canada findings: 1999 marked the fourth straight annual decline for Canada in youth violent crime. There are, however, areas for concern.

Violent crime committed by young females has been a particular concern. Female youths charged with violent crime tend to be younger than their male counterparts. Among females, the rate has tended to peak at ages 14 and 15, while for male youths it increases with age. One positive trend is that the violent charge rate for BC youth, which has been historically higher than the national average, continues to fall faster than the national rate. In 1999, the violent charge rate for BC youth fell below the charge rate for Canadian youth for the first time in ten years.

BC YOUTH AND CANADA YOUTH CHARGED WITH VIOLENT CRIMES (as a percentage of all youth), 1990 – 1999



Source: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, and BC Stats

Analysis

Parental satisfaction levels with school performance are reasonably high. Pregnancy rates and criminal charge rates for youth are dropping.

However, there is need for better data collection and analysis in this area. All of the available indicators used in this report were fairly general. For example, when a respondent reports dissatisfaction with the school's provision of a "safe and accessible learning environment", this doesn't identify whether perceived hazards are related to the physical site (e.g., broken fixtures), social factors (e.g., bullying), or other factors.

Also, all of the available indicators were indirect. For example, parents were asked about satisfaction with students' skills of co-operation, and police records of charge rates were used to measure irresponsible behaviour. But students were not directly surveyed about such things as citizenship attitudes, volunteerism, or risky behaviour, and the indicators did not link development of these skills and attitudes to school programs (e.g., "How well did your school teach you about sexually transmitted diseases?").

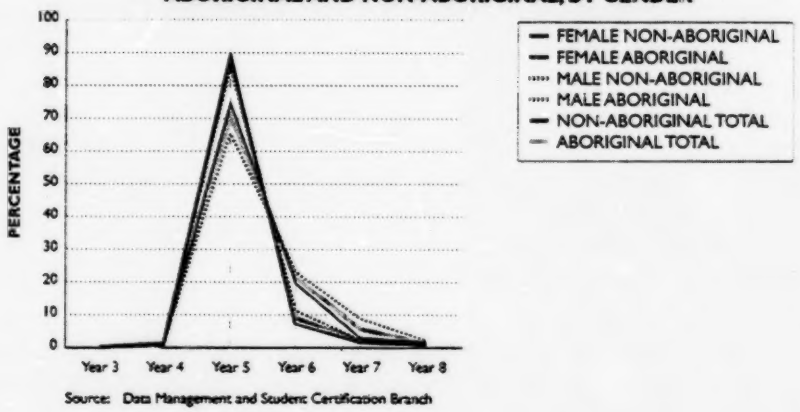
Finally, the available indicators miss many important aspects of citizenship and social responsibility such as volunteerism.

In the past, detailed and direct measures for many of these topics have been gathered by in-school surveys. The ministry is exploring the development of appropriate measures.

EQUITY

All students should be able to progress through the educational system in a timely fashion. Excessive time to completion can be an indication that students are not being well served or accommodated. On average, students take about 5.2 years after starting Grade 8 to receive a Dogwood certificate. Aboriginal students take about 5.4 years. In the figure below, this difference in rates of completion between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students can be seen by the clustering of completion lines into two distinct groups by Aboriginal status.

YEARS TO DOGWOOD COMPLETION FROM GRADE 8, ABORIGINAL AND NON-ABORIGINAL, BY GENDER



Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch

Aboriginal student performance has been improving at a faster rate than non-Aboriginal student performance, but it is still much lower. Aboriginal students continue to experience much lower pass rates than non-Aboriginal students in both the FSA and provincial exams. Participation rates in provincial exams are also much lower, presenting a major barrier to transition to post-secondary education. Efforts must be extended to those issues of transition to post-secondary that are specific to Aboriginal students, as has been done for students in general, through other efforts such as articulation agreements and Career Technical Centres. Maintaining higher improvement targets for Aboriginal student outcomes will be required in order to enable these students to achieve parity with other students.

The completion rate for female students has been consistently higher than the rate for male students. Girls also continue to outperform boys in FSA examinations of reading comprehension and writing, and are about the same in numeracy (where boys used to enjoy an advantage). Differences between male and female participation and performance in Mathematics 12 provincial exams are also declining or disappearing over time. Females also perform better in English 12 exams and they tend to win more scholarships and awards, giving them more options for further education. Long-standing differences in transition rates for different groups of students persist. Fewer males make the direct transition to BC universities, and this pattern is much more pronounced for Aboriginal students.

Special Education programs and policies intended to accommodate the special needs of students are helping to improve completion rates. Students who might not have completed high school are now receiving Dogwood Diplomas. Shared efforts on the part of schools and communities have been paying off, but they must continue. It may now become more important to address specific issues of transition to post-secondary education for Aboriginal students.

EXPECTATIONS AND SATISFACTION

The student is the centre of British Columbia's education system. The partners who make up the system – the ministry, school districts, schools, educators, parents, and members of the community – strive to meet the educational needs and aspirations of every student. It is important to follow the views of these partners, to monitor success in achieving goals and to keep in touch with changing needs and conditions. The ministry does this by using a combination of polls and information from school sources such as Foundation Skills Assessment and accreditation.

External surveys

A survey conducted in March 2000[4] found that only 26 percent of the BC public believed that the general quality and performance of BC schools was good, while 48 percent believed that school quality was fair and 18 percent believed it was poor. Satisfaction levels are a little higher among parents of elementary students than among parents of secondary students. Forty-two percent of the BC public felt that schools were doing a good or excellent job of meeting the needs of students, while 38 percent felt schools were doing a fair job and 13 percent felt schools were doing a poor job.

When asked about problems within BC schools, the six issues most commonly mentioned were bullying and violence, job market readiness, student discipline, reading and writing, homework support, and special needs assistance.

Satisfaction with government management of education has improved somewhat since an earlier survey conducted in October 1999. In general, parents of secondary students are less satisfied than the general public with government management of education. The three most commonly listed reasons for satisfaction with management of education were quality of education, increases in funding, and increases in technology. The three most commonly listed reasons for dissatisfaction were funding cuts, low standards, and not enough teachers.

[4] The survey was based on a random sample of BC residents. Telephone interviews of 800 participants were conducted from March 1 to March 20, 2000. A survey this size has a confidence level of ± 3 percent, 19 times out of 20.

Eighty-eight percent of respondents felt that the provincial government should report to parents on how well their schools and school boards are educating young people, and 78 percent felt that individual results from province-wide tests in reading, writing and numeracy should be made available to schools and parents. These responses confirm the broad public support for the provincial Accreditation program, and the Foundation Skills Assessments.

The survey indicated strong public support for education. Ninety-four percent of respondents strongly agreed that children's futures depend on receiving a quality education, 88 percent strongly agreed that the BC economy depends on a well-educated and trained workforce, and 84 percent strongly agreed that public education is one of the best economic investments the government can make.

Internal surveys

Accreditation

The school accreditation process is an important method of assessing public satisfaction with how the school system is meeting its objectives. Each public school undergoes an internal and external review every six years. The process is staggered so that data are available each year from one sixth of all public schools. Almost all teachers at participant schools, and many parents (usually members of the Parent Advisory Council), take part in accreditation, reporting their levels of satisfaction with student and school performance in several topic areas. Many parents believe that where education growth plans are implemented and monitored, accreditation helps improve student performance. Parents also believe the process provides public accountability in education.

The findings of parent responses to the Accreditation Satisfaction Surveys indicate that:

- ***The school system serves most students well, but some areas need improvement.***

Overall, parents were satisfied with the school system. The average level of satisfaction across all 33 accreditation topics was 77 percent. However, parents were less satisfied with specific topics. The two that ranked lowest in satisfaction related to:

- Students' knowledge of the Applied Skills (technology education, business education and home economics) curriculum (70 percent satisfied or very satisfied); and
- School's fair allocation of human and material resources (68 percent satisfied or very satisfied).

- ***In general schools are seen as responsive and accountable, and willing to involve the community in planning.***

The public places great importance on the responsiveness and accountability of government services. Responses from parents who took part in accreditation indicate general satisfaction in this area.

- ***Most parents are satisfied with the quality of education and teaching in BC schools.***

According to Accreditation satisfaction responses, satisfaction with the quality of education and teaching in BC schools is high.

- ***Parents are generally satisfied with how schools are developing students' personal and social skills.***

Eighty-one percent of parents were satisfied or very satisfied with school performance in developing students' sense of social responsibility, and 81 percent in the areas of self-confidence and personal initiative.

- ***Parents are generally satisfied with student performance in the academic curriculum, although satisfaction varies by subject.***

The highest satisfaction levels were with physical education (83 percent satisfied), fine arts (76 percent satisfied), and career and personal planning (77 percent satisfied). Parents were less satisfied with student performance in science (73 percent satisfied), social studies (73 percent satisfied), language arts (72 percent satisfied), computer technology (71 percent satisfied), mathematics (70 percent satisfied), and applied skills (70 percent satisfied).

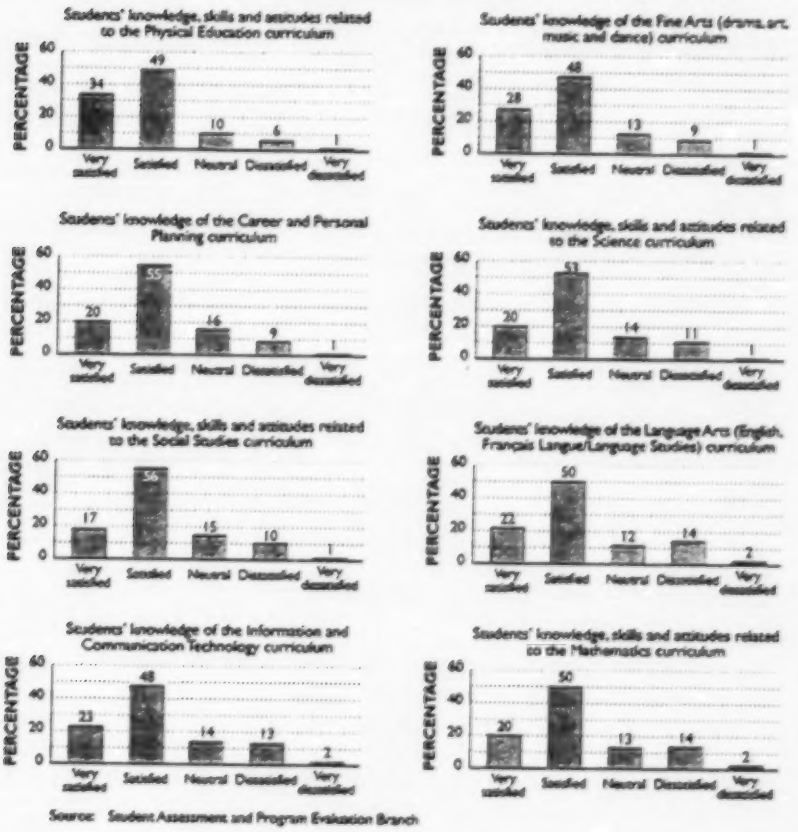
Analysis

Data challenges

One challenge in tracking the expectations and satisfaction of students, parents, educators and the public is presented by inconsistent sources of data. For example, satisfaction measures often come from polls that are conducted at a specific time, and for a specific purpose. These polls are usually not repeated, which doesn't allow trends to be followed. Even if different opinion polls are conducted in consecutive years, another challenge is presented by inconsistency of purpose, which rarely leaves enough in common to compare polls. Finally, many polls address issues at a very high level, measuring general satisfaction but not providing specific information for program improvement.

In response to these challenges, the ministry is working to extend the use of accreditation data, which are collected in a consistent format and time frame. Furthermore, survey data that are now required for the accreditation process may become more readily available, giving more detailed information on many topics.

PARENT SATISFACTION LEVELS
(1999/2000 accreditation results)



Source: Student Assessment and Program Evaluation Branch

APPENDICES

I: Performance Plan

Ministry goals, objectives, and related indicators

Goal: Improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity of K-12 education

Objective 1. Improve student success and achievement

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES/ DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS OBJECTIVE	ACTUAL OUTCOMES FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR
• **Foundation Skills Assessment** Desired outcome: *Increased proportion of students achieving an acceptable standard in reading, writing, and numeracy.*	Overall FSA results • Overall, between 68 and 91 percent of students met or exceeded performance standards for their grade level. Between 1 and 10 percent exceeded expectations. Details on pages 23 to 24
• **Duration of time for secondary school completion** Desired outcome: *Maintain or decrease average length of time for completion.*	• Available measure: "Years to Dogwood Completion", calculated by tracking a Grade 8 cohort. The measure indicates that Aboriginal students take longer to complete. Details on page 37
• **School completion/graduation rates** Desired outcome: *Maintain or improve rates.*	• Dogwood Completion: Year over year increase from 75 percent to 75.3 percent. Increase of 12 percentage points since 89/90. • Success is not evenly distributed. Major differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students, and between males and females. Details on pages 15 to 18.
• **Rate of transition from K-12 to post-secondary education or the labour force** Desired outcome: *Maintain or improve rates.*	• Transition: Overall, university eligibility increased by about 0.8 percent since last year. Admittance increased by about 0.2 percent. Specific sub-groups also improved (e.g., Aboriginal students), but there are still large differences. This data is based on the four BC universities. There is currently no data available for transition to other forms of post-secondary study. Details on pages 20 to 24. • No direct data available for transition to labour force. • Receipt of Income Assistance: There has been a general trend of decreased dependence on Income Assistance for over 3 years. Specific sub-groups of students (e.g., non-graduates, Aboriginal, female) still have far higher levels of Income Assistance. Details on page 21.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES/ DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS OBJECTIVE	ACTUAL OUTCOMES FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR
• **Differences in performance among subgroups of students** Desired outcome: *Decrease performance differences, with a long-term desired outcome of parity.*	• FSA results by subgroups: *reading comprehension* - girls did better than boys at all grades, with male performance falling off at higher grades. Performance by Aboriginal students was considerably lower. *Writing* - girls performed better than boys did, and Aboriginal student performance was low. *Numeracy* - boys performed about the same as girls. Aboriginal students showed considerably lower results. Currently enrolled ESL students showed slightly stronger results. Details on pages 23 to 24. • Exams results by subgroups: Females have done better than males in English 12 over the past six years. Male participation in Mathematics 12 has exceeded female participation by a small margin for the past six years. Within the past few years an equal proportion of males and females have received an A or B on their exam. This year a slightly higher percentage of females than males received an A or B. In English 12 and Mathematics 12, a large gap persists between percentages of Grade 12 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students who enrol in the course and pass the provincial exam. Details on pages 25 to 31.
• **Use of remedial programs** Desired outcome: *Decreased use of remedial programs.*	• No data available. However, learning assistance was reviewed in 1997, using survey data. Future evaluation could be based on this framework.

Objective 2. Set policies and standards to clarify expectations for student learning (FSA results, policy accessibility, content and performance standard usage).

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES/ DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS OBJECTIVE	ACTUAL OUTCOMES FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR
• **Content and performance standards are used in classrooms** Desired outcome: *Increased teachers' use of content and performance standards.*	• No data available.
• **Consolidation of ministry policy** Desired outcome: *Comprehensive ministry policy index published on the web.*	• Approx. two-thirds of ministry policy is on the web. Currently, no index available.

Objective 3. Improve learning conditions/environment for students.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES/ DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS OBJECTIVE	ACTUAL OUTCOMES FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR
• **Portables Reduction** Desired outcome: *Decrease numbers of portables.*	• The number of portables has been reduced by three percent in 15 months. Further reductions are targeted. Details on page 9.
• **Space for students** Desired outcome: *Increase available space for students.*	• No data available.
• **Student safety** Desired outcome: *Increase students' feelings of safety in school*	• General information available from Accreditation. Parents are generally satisfied with "provision of a safe and accessible learning environment for all students" (74 percent satisfied or very satisfied). No data available from students. Details on page 34.
• **Drug and Alcohol Use** Desired outcome: *Decrease school related drug or alcohol use.*	• No data available.
• **Violence and Bullying** Desired outcome: *Decrease incidents of violence, harassment, or bullying.*	• When asked about problems within BC schools, among the six most commonly mentioned by parents are bullying and violence.

Objective 4. Maintain an adequate and equitable funding system.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES/ DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS OBJECTIVE	ACTUAL OUTCOMES FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR
• **Funding: BC Versus other jurisdictions** Desired outcome: *BC education funding compares favourably with other jurisdictions.*	• Per student funding for the BC K-12 education system has been rising gradually for several years, and is comparable to other similar jurisdictions. Details on page 59.
• **Funding: BC Versus other countries** Desired outcome: *BC education funding compares favourably with other countries.*	• No data available.

Objective 5. Improve inter-agency policy and program coordination (survey or other instrument to measure co-ordination between agencies).

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES/ DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS OBJECTIVE	ACTUAL OUTCOMES FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR
• **Co-ordination among agencies** Desired outcome: *Improved co-ordination.*	• No data available.

Goal: Improve public confidence in, and support for, K-12 education

Objective 1: Monitor and report on the performance of K-12 education to school districts and the public

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES/ DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS OBJECTIVE	ACTUAL OUTCOMES FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR
• **Exams results reported** Desired outcome: *Improve reporting of exams results.*	• No data available.
• **FSA results reported** Desired outcome: *Improve reporting of FSA results.*	• No trend data available. In 2000, FSA results were reported at school and student level for the first time. This represents a significant increase in reporting and distribution of results.
• **Acceptance and use of Performance Reports** Desired outcome: *Improve acceptance and use.*	• Schools have increased the use of performance data in their accreditation reports.
• **Public Satisfaction** Desired outcome: *Improve public satisfaction.*	• There has been a slight increase in public satisfaction with management of the K-12 system between October 1999 and March 2000. Details on page 39.

Objective 2. Inform the public about K-12 education in British Columbia.

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES/ DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS OBJECTIVE	ACTUAL OUTCOMES FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR
• **Public awareness and support** Desired outcome: *Improve public support.*	• There is strong public support for public education. Details on page 39.

Goal: Develop a responsive and innovative organization to support the attainment of goals I and II

Objective 1. Ensure that, at all levels, ministry staff members are representative of the British Columbia population (representativeness of staff, representativeness of hiring).

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES/ DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS OBJECTIVE	ACTUAL OUTCOMES FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR
• **Representativeness of ministry staff** Desired outcome: *Maintained or improved representativeness of staff composition.*	• No data available.
• **Representativeness of ministry hiring** Desired outcome: *New hires adequately represent the population served.*	• No data available.

Objective 2. Ensure that ministry staff members have the resources, tools, training, and support to perform their duties (staff survey).

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES/ DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS OBJECTIVE	ACTUAL OUTCOMES FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR
• **Adequacy of resources, tools, training and support to perform duties** Desired outcome: *Optimize adequacy of resources, tools, training and support.*	• No data available. However, a general survey of satisfaction with public sector employment was prepared for the BC Public Service Employee Relations Commission in March 2000.

Objective 3. Ensure that ministry resources are aligned with ministry goals and objectives (comparison of budget allocations with goals and objectives).

KEY PERFORMANCE MEASURES/ DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR THIS OBJECTIVE	ACTUAL OUTCOMES FOR THE 1999/2000 SCHOOL YEAR
• **Alignment of ministry resources with ministry goals and objectives** Desired outcome: *Sufficient resources allocated to strategies and activities to achieve goals and objectives.*	• No data available.

II: Glossary

Aboriginal Education Programs
Locally developed programs designed to improve the quality of education for Aboriginal students in the K-12 education system. The planning and delivery of all programs must involve the local Aboriginal community. Programs include:

- Aboriginal cultural and language programs, to provide all students with the opportunity to develop an understanding and appreciation of the history, language, culture, traditions, and issues of local Aboriginal peoples; and
- Aboriginal support services, designed for Aboriginal students requiring additional support to succeed in school, such as counseling, academic support and home-school liaison services.

Accreditation
A process involving all BC public schools, focusing on school improvement and accountability. Under the School Accreditation Regulation, the process involves staff, parent and student participation in a school self-assessment, the development of a school growth plan, and evaluation by an external team. Student outcomes (knowledge, skills, and attitudes), parent/teacher satisfaction, and community satisfaction are examined and reported. A progress report is done annually by the school.

Adjudication
To ensure equitable access to and participation in Grade 12 provincial examinations, the ministry reviews adjudication requests for students with physical disabilities, visual impairments, hearing impairments, severe learning disabilities, and emotional/behavioural disorders. Adjudication can make provision for special format examinations, modification of the means, setting or recording of the examination, and the length of the examination session so students with disabilities can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding.

Adult Basic Education (ABE)
See Adult Dogwood or Adult Graduation Diploma.

Adult Dogwood, or Adult Graduation Diploma
The term Adult Dogwood previously referred to the Adult Graduation Program Certificate, an alternative secondary school completion certificate issued through the K-12 system. In May 1998, the Adult Dogwood and the Provincial ABE Diploma were harmonized and replaced by the new BC Adult Dogwood (also known as the Adult Graduation Diploma). This common credential is from both ministries (Ministry of Education and Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology) and came into effect on September 1, 1999. Adult Graduation Programs provide adult learners with basic life skills, literacy, numeracy, language skills, secondary school equivalency and/or prerequisites for entry into post-secondary education or the job market. Both colleges and school districts offer these programs.

Adult Student
A student 19 years of age or older as of July 1 of the current school year.

Advanced Placement
Entering a post-secondary program at a point beyond which a learner would normally begin studies by obtaining course credit for skills and knowledge gained prior to application to the program. For example, Grade 11 and 12 students can accelerate their entry to post-secondary studies by earning credit for approved post-secondary courses and also count these courses toward school completion.

Alternative School Completion Certificates
Alternatives to the Dogwood Diploma, these include the Adult Dogwood (Adult Graduation Program Certificate), the General Educational Development Certificate (GED), the Adult Basic Education (ABE) Provincial Diploma, and Letters of Assessment. These certificates may be recognized in place of a Dogwood Diploma at the option of post-secondary institutions and employers.

Applied Academics
A focus for learning designed to motivate and challenge students to reach higher academic standards by connecting what they learn with the world they experience. BC has four Applied Academics provincial curriculum areas: Information Technology 11 and 12, Applications of Mathematics 10 to 12, Applications of Physics 11 and 12, and Technical and Professional Communications 12.

Articulation
The process of connecting two or more educational sectors, institutions or programs to help learners make a smooth transition between the sectors within the system. For example, agreements and co-ordination between secondary and post-secondary institutions can ensure that secondary courses will complement and be recognized toward entry into courses or programs in post-secondary institutions.

British Columbia School Completion Certificate
Issued to a student in the K-12 system who has successfully completed the goals and objectives contained in his or her Individual Education Plan, in accordance with the requirements set out in Ministerial Order 205/95. This certificate is intended mainly for students with special needs, and does not represent secondary school level completion (Dogwood Diploma).

Career and Personal Planning (CAPP) Curriculum
Comprising three interrelated elements focusing on the personal growth of students in Grades 8-12: the planning process, to help students develop goals and implement plans; personal development, to encourage healthy living and mental well-being; and career development, to explore the workplace and prepare for a job. There is also a work experience component for Grades 11 and 12.

Career Preparation Program
An educational program that includes work experience designed to prepare a student, in relation to a specific career sector, for entry into the workforce, continued studies in school, or further study in a post-secondary institution.

Career Program
An educational program focusing on a career or career sector and combining related subjects with a work experience component which includes a Career Preparation Program, Co-operative Education Program, or a Secondary School Apprenticeship Program.

Class Size
The number of students who took the same course at the same time with the same instructor. Average class size is the total number of students divided by the total number of classes or divisions. Average class size is calculated at the school district and provincial levels.

Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (CSF)
The CSF is BC's only francophone education authority. It was established in 1995 to meet provincial government obligations under the Charter of Rights and Freedoms to enable francophones to manage their own education programs. Students enrolled in CSF schools are taught the same standard curriculum as any other BC student; however, they receive their instruction in French, and have an added linguistic and cultural component.

Continuing Education
An education program offered by school districts, primarily for adults, leading to either secondary school completion or the upgrading of a current completion certificate.

Curriculum
What students are expected to know and be able to do at each grade in each subject. School boards are required to address these expectations. *See also* Provincially Prescribed Curriculum, Integrated Resource Package and Learning Resources.

Direct Transition Rate
The percentage of all Grade 12 graduates enrolling in BC universities in the Fall immediately after graduation from high school. Students who delay their entrance, or who proceed to other universities or post-secondary studies, are not included.

Distance Education
Course work that takes place without a requirement for the learner to be physically present in a traditional classroom setting. Instruction occurs through correspondence, telecommunications, or other electronic media and is provided throughout the year, permitting a flexible schedule. Distance education courses are available to public and non-public K-12 school students.

Distributed Electronic Learning (previously called Electronically Delivered Education)
Publicly funded programs that allow K-12 students to study at home with the use of a computer. Typically, students are lent computer equipment that enables them to enhance their studies through additional media such as e-mail, on-line courses, learning software, and CD-ROMs.

Dogwood Completion Rate (population-based)
An estimate of the proportion of students who started Grade 8 in a BC school and graduated or would graduate with a Dogwood Diploma. This rate, adjusted for population change over time, was used until 1996/97.

Dogwood Completion Rate (tracking-based)
The proportion of students who graduate with a Dogwood Diploma within six years of starting Grade 8 for the first time in a BC public or independent school. It includes migrants to BC who would have been in Grade 8 in the base year, and is adjusted for out-migration from BC. Most students graduate within the first five years of the six-year period. This rate, which uses Personal Education Numbers (PENs) to track students, is used in 1996/97 and subsequent years.

Dogwood Diploma
A certificate granted to students who meet secondary school completion requirements by successfully completing Grade 11 and 12 required courses (Foundation Studies) and elective courses (Selected Studies). Also known as the British Columbia Certificate of Graduation.

Dual Credit
Credit for secondary school completion that is also recognized for transfer of credit in courses and programs at post-secondary institutions.

Electronically Delivered Education
See Distributed Electronic Learning

Eligibility
See University Eligibility

English as a Second Language (ESL) Program
Designed for students whose use of English is sufficiently different from Standard English that they require specialized services to adjust to the linguistic and cultural environment in order to be successful in the British Columbia school system.

Equity Groups
In this report equity groups are considered to be people of Aboriginal descent, visible minorities, people with disabilities, and females.

Equivalency
The process of receiving credit for a ministry-authorized or locally developed Grade 11 or Grade 12 course, based upon documented achievement of learning outcomes from a course or program from another institution or jurisdiction.

External Courses and Credits
External courses, programs, and credentials are developed and/or offered outside the BC school system. Students who successfully complete external courses, programs, or credentials approved by the ministry earn credit toward Grade 12 graduation.

Foundation Skills Assessment (FSA)
This assessment is administered annually to all students in Grade 4, 7, and 10. It measures student achievement in reading comprehension, first draft writing, and numeracy.

Francophone Education Authority (FEA)
See Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique.

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Student
A measure equivalent to the number of students participating full-time (i.e., for a full day, full week) in the education system. For example, a Kindergarten student is considered a 0.5 FTE; full-day Kindergarten students are recognized as full FTEs. A school age student in Grades 1-12 (ages 5-19), enrolled full-time is considered one FTE. One FTE for an adult student is equal to eight courses.

Funding Allocation System
The system the provincial government uses to allocate funds to the school districts for public education. The yearly amounts are derived through a formula based on relative costs for providing educational programs at the district level. The Province also provides supplemental funding to cover capital costs and special programs.

General Educational Development Tests (GED)
GED testing is available to adult residents of British Columbia who have been out of a school system for at least one year and who have not graduated from secondary school or equivalent. The GED is a set of five multiple-choice tests in the areas of writing skills, social studies, science, literature and the arts, and mathematics. A successful candidate will receive a British Columbia Secondary School Equivalency Certificate. Certificate holders may qualify for a better job or for entry to some post-secondary education and training programs where the certificate is accepted in lieu of secondary school completion.

Gender Equity Program
A program designed to improve opportunities, access, and support for the equitable participation of males and females at all levels and in all aspects of the educational system.

Grade 12 Graduation Rate
For any one year, this rate represents graduated students as a percentage of all students would possibly graduate. Any grade 12 student who is registered for one or more courses during a school year, who has not already graduated is considered a possible graduate. Possible graduation is based on final grades for courses finished prior to the given school year, and the assumption that the student will pass all the courses in which he/she is registered in the given school year.

Headcount Enrolment
The number of students (as opposed to full-time equivalents) enrolled in each district, school, grade, program, or course.

Home School
Students may be taught at home, without the supervision of a school, but are registered with a public, francophone, distance education, or independent school or with the ministry.

Independent School
A person or organization outside the public school system providing an educational program to 10 or more school-age students. These schools are governed by the Independent School Act and are grouped into four funding classifications. Group 1 schools offer programs consistent with BC curriculum, employ certified teachers, maintain adequate education facilities, and meet municipal codes. They receive per-student grants at 50 percent of the student costs of local public schools. Group 2 schools meet the same requirements as Group 1 schools, but receive student grants at the 35 percent level because their per-student costs exceed those of the local public schools. Group 3 schools must maintain adequate facilities and meet municipal codes; they do not receive provincial grants. Group 4 schools cater to non-provincial students. They meet the same curriculum requirements as Group 1, and at least 80 percent of their teachers are certified. These schools must be bonded and are not eligible for grants.

Individual Education Plan
An educational document that defines what goals and standards an individual student is expected to achieve, and what supports, adaptations, or modifications are required to enable the student to meet those goals. Students with special educational needs are expected to achieve some, most, or all provincial curriculum outcomes with special support.

Integrated Resource Package (IRP)
An educational document that provides some basic information required by K-12 teachers to implement a subject/course. It contains provincially prescribed learning outcomes (also known as provincially prescribed curriculum), suggested instructional strategies for achieving learning outcomes, suggested assessment strategies, and provincially recommended learning resources.

Job Skills
Skills required to be successful in the workforce including (but not limited to) basic communication and writing skills, problem solving, organizational skills, mathematical skills, computer skills, personal management, and teamwork skills.

Learning Resources
Information that supports the curriculum. Learning resources come in various formats including print, online, video, CD-ROM, software, and multimedia.

Locally Developed Programs
The School Act gives school boards the authority to offer education programs that are developed locally to suit the specific needs of the community. As much as 20 percent of curriculum can be made up of locally developed programs.

Open Learning Agency (OLA)
The OLA offers a range of college and university-level programs leading to certificates, diplomas and degrees, and works in partnership with other post-secondary institutions to provide distance learning. OLA operates the Knowledge Network, which has a mandate to provide educational programming to the general public, and works with the province's educational institutions to deliver formal instruction by means of television. OLA also co-ordinates such functions as the International Credential Evaluation Service and the educational "Credit Bank," which assesses and gives credit for previous formal and non-formal learning.

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)
Under the School Act, parents may establish an advisory council for the school their child attends. Through elected officers, the council may advise the board, principal, and staff on any matters relating to the school.

Participation Rate
The number of unique exam writers for a given course divided by the September 30 Grade 12 headcount enrolment. (A unique student is counted only once, regardless of how many times he or she writes the exam.)

Pass Rate
The percentage of all provincial examinations awarded a passing grade (A, B, C+, C, or C-).

Passport to Education
A program introduced in the 1987/88 school year to recognize and reward student achievement in Grades 9-12 in a broad range of academic and non-academic areas. The intent is to motivate all students to study consistently during the years leading to completion, and to encourage them to pursue further education through post-secondary institutions and job-training programs. Financial credits ranging from $125 to $275 are awarded to the top 30 percent of students in each grade, based on results, effort, citizenship, and community involvement.

Personal Education Number (PEN)
A permanent, unique identification number that is assigned to each K-12 student (and, increasingly, in the post-secondary system). PENs are used to generate statistics about student achievement and transition between grades, districts, and systems.

Prior Learning Assessment
Assessment by some valid and reliable means, by a qualified specialist, of what a student has learned through non-formal education, training, or experience.

Provincial Examinations
A measurement of student performance in selected Grade 12 academic courses. Some independent schools in BC and some public schools in the Yukon also participate. Provincial examinations are currently held in November, January, April, June, and August.

Provincial Learning Assessment Program (PLAP)
Provincial Learning Assessments are administered on a sample basis as needed to measure student achievement in specific subject areas such as science or social studies.

Provincial Learning Network (PLN)
A province-wide telecommunications network that connects K-12 schools with colleges, universities, institutes, Open Learning Agency sites, libraries, museums, and science and cultural sites.

Provincial Resource Program
An education program established by order of the Minister and operated by a school board for students who, for health or other reasons, cannot attend their regular school. Students are enrolled on a short-term basis (three months or less) or on a long-term basis (more than three months).

Provincially Prescribed Curriculum
The provincially prescribed (required) curriculum is contained within Integrated Resource Packages (IRPs) in the form of learning outcomes. These are statements of what students are expected to know and be able to do in each grade. They describe the knowledge, enduring ideas, issues, concepts, skills, and attitudes for each subject. All learning outcomes complete the stem: "It is expected that students will . . ."

Public School
A body of students, teachers, other staff, and facilities organized as a unit for educational purposes under the supervision of an administrative officer and administered by a district school board. Types of public schools include standard, continuing education, and distance education schools.

School Age
Youth who are at least five years old by December 31 of the current school year and less than 19 years old by July 1 are legally required to attend school.

School Board
An elected board of trustees as constituted under the *School Act*.

School Completion Rate
An estimate of the proportion of students who started Grade 8 in a BC school and graduate with a Dogwood Diploma. This rate is adjusted for population changes over time. *See also* Dogwood Completion Rate.

School District
A geographic area constituted as a district under the School Act. There were 59 school districts and the Francophone Education Authority in the province at the time of this report.

School District Annual Report
Each school board is required to prepare and submit a report, by December 31 each year, on the effectiveness of educational programs offered in the district during the previous school year. The report must include a statement of the board's mission or vision for the district, a list of goals and objectives, and information relating to a series of key indicators of student and school performance.

School Growth Plan
A developmental plan, coming out of the school accreditation process, which outlines school initiatives to be implemented over a six-year cycle. This plan should identify several key areas that are broad in scope, yet provide focus for enhancing student learning opportunities. *See also* Accreditation.

Secondary School Apprenticeship
A provincial career program which provides the opportunity for secondary school students to earn dual credit for their workplace-based training when they are registered as apprentices while attending secondary school. Students can earn 16 credits for their workplace-based training.

Special Education
Refers to a range of student support services provided by school districts to respond to the educational needs of its students, particularly those who are gifted or have a disability.

Students with Special Needs
Students who have a disability of an intellectual, physical, sensory, emotional or behavioural nature, have a learning disability, or have exceptional gifts or talents.

University Eligibility
Graduation with a Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 2.5 (A=4; B=3; C+=2.5; C=2; C-=1). The GPA is calculated by averaging English 12 and the three other highest-graded Grade 12 courses. University eligibility is a measure of eligibility to apply for university entrance. It is not by itself a guarantee that the application will be successful; it is not a formal qualification.

III: References

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British Columbians' Perceptions of the Provincial Public Education System, Opinion poll conducted by Consumerscan International for the BC School Superintendents' Association, January 2000.

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Labour Force Survey (Annual Averages), Statistics Canada and BC Stats, March 2000.

"Profile of Youth Justice", *The Daily*, Statistics Canada, Tuesday, December 15, 1998.

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Review of Learning Assistance Services Report, 1997, Prepared by Desharnais & Associates for the Special Programs Branch, 1997.

"Weighing the Evidence: A Report on BC's Children and Youth", Annual Report, The BC Children's Commission, 1999.

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IV: Funding

PROVINCIAL SUMMARY OF TOTAL BUDGETED REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES, SCHOOL YEARS 1996/97 TO 1999/2000

Budgeted district revenues	96/97 FINAL	% OF TOTAL	97/98 FINAL	% OF TOTAL	98/99 FINAL	% OF TOTAL	99/00 FINAL	% OF TOTAL
Provincial operating grants	$3,413,240,834	95.8%	$3,458,457,749	95.4%	$3,496,901,658	94.6%	$3,530,389,801	94.1%
Provincial collective agreement	$0	0.0%	$0	0.0%	$30,253,700	0.8%	$55,144,579	1.5%
Special purpose grants	$12,273,959	0.3%	$7,891,084	0.2%	$3,778,375	0.1%	$524,739	0.0%
Local revenue (net of special purpose grants)	$107,032,641	3.0%	$133,919,064	3.7%	$134,043,404	3.6%	$140,570,000	3.8%
Operating surplus	$30,364,215	0.9%	$24,094,956	0.7%	$29,205,425	0.8%	$22,958,914	0.6%
Debt services (capital) - interim financing	$0	0.0%	$0	0.0%	$1,159,600	0.0%	$1,544,478	0.0%
Total budgeted district revenues *	$3,562,911,649	100.0%	$3,624,362,853	100.0%	$3,695,342,162	100.0%	$3,751,132,511	100.0%
Budgeted district expenditures								
Operating expenditures (functions 1 - 9) **								
Instructional salaries and benefits	$2,550,830,097	71.6%	$2,600,454,235	71.7%	$2,633,498,814	71.3%	$2,653,372,791	70.7%
Instructional supplies and services	$159,813,552	4.5%	$164,903,414	4.5%	$162,698,253	4.4%	$167,351,654	4.5%
Operations and maintenance	$444,552,313	12.5%	$445,540,257	12.3%	$451,326,949	12.2%	$459,571,173	12.2%
Administration	$295,085,157	8.3%	$294,760,235	8.1%	$297,787,582	8.1%	$298,496,678	8.0%
Transportation	$82,112,322	2.3%	$85,185,536	2.4%	$86,365,380	2.3%	$88,038,941	2.3%
Debt services (operating)	$94,560	0.0%	$249,544	0.0%	$450,083	0.0%	$551,753	0.0%
Provincial collective agreement	$0	0.0%	$0	0.0%	$28,912,378	0.8%	$54,677,140	1.5%
Operating deficit	$1,971,445	0.1%	$4,072,962	0.1%	$5,897,041	0.2%	$5,252,434	0.1%
Current Year Trust Fund Deficit	$0	0.0%	$0	0.0%	$0	0.0%	$60,000	0.0%
Education change/implementation training	$10,068,531	0.3%	$11,940,427	0.3%	$11,936,478	0.3%	$11,756,216	0.3%
Local capital (plus local capital deficit)	$18,383,672	0.5%	$17,256,243	0.5%	$13,968,282	0.4%	$13,917,815	0.4%
Debt services (capital) - interim financing	$0	0.0%	$0	0.0%	$1,159,600	0.0%	$1,544,478	0.0%
Total budgeted district expenditures *	$3,562,911,649	100.0%	$3,624,362,853	100.0%	$3,694,000,840	100.0%	$3,754,591,073	100.0%
Total budgeted expenditures								
Total budgeted district expenditures (see above)	$3,562,911,649	88.9%	$3,624,362,853	88.7%	$3,694,000,840	88.9%	$3,754,591,073	88.0%
Budgeted ministry expenditures on behalf of districts								
Learning resources	$27,279,458	0.7%	$29,526,428	0.7%	$28,508,771	0.7%	$27,781,306	0.7%
Provincial Learning Network	$0	0.0%	$0	0.0%	$14,110,944	0.3%	$19,622,000	0.5%
Debt services (capital) ***	$418,190,722	10.4%	$432,260,602	10.6%	$420,000,000	10.1%	$465,900,000	10.9%
Total expenditures budgeted by or for districts	$4,008,381,829	100.0%	$4,086,149,883	100.0%	$4,156,620,555	100.0%	$4,267,894,379	100.0%

* Excludes Accreditation and Annual Capital Allowance to ensure consistency with 1996/97 and onward budgets.

** Some Functions are no longer in use.

*** As of April 1, 1998, school boards have been released from most debt servicing obligations and these have been assumed by the Province. In this table, amounts prior to 1998/99 have been restated for consistency.

Due to rounding, the sums of the individual items may not agree with the totals.

Source: School Finance Branch

BUDGETED EXPENDITURES IN SPECIAL PROGRAMS

	1993/1994 BUDGETED	1994/1995 BUDGETED	1995/1996 BUDGETED	1996/1997 BUDGETED	1997/1998 BUDGETED	1998/1999 BUDGETED	1999/2000 BUDGETED
Career preparation	$26,110,449	$34,518,367	$38,401,624	$44,831,630	$44,479,479	$43,541,515	$42,897,868
ESL	$58,200,915	$73,556,799	$75,203,317	$74,759,959	$85,944,266	$78,848,547	$68,826,174
Aboriginal	$24,609,754	$34,239,824	$36,492,401	$39,210,242	$40,326,506	$40,304,774	$43,229,941
Special education (excluding gifted)	$360,291,111	$403,404,843	$421,521,885	$441,245,076	$450,843,852	$463,774,775	$468,711,503
Special education (gifted)	$16,708,903	$15,575,728	$14,861,133	$13,128,327	$12,322,256	$10,741,177	$9,259,689
Language programs	$81,866,118	$75,802,936	$70,791,633	$66,532,037	$69,711,677	$70,097,084	$70,221,565
Totals	$567,787,250	$637,098,497	$657,271,993	$679,707,271	$703,628,036	$707,307,872	$703,146,740

Source: School Finance Branch

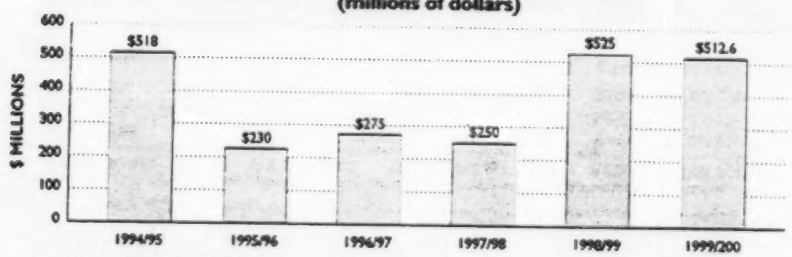
Spending for programs designed to improve equity of access

Over $590 million was budgeted for 1999/2000 to improve equity of access for 168,681 full-time equivalent students in the following programs:

PROGRAM	1998/1999 SPENDING	1999/2000 SPENDING
Special education (excluding gifted)	$463,774,775	$468,711,503
Francophone program	$1,295,373	$2,735,262
English as a second language (ESL)	$78,848,547	$68,826,174
Aboriginal education	$40,304,774	$43,229,941
Special education (gifted)	$10,741,177	$9,259,689
Total cost of programs	$594,964,646	$592,762,569

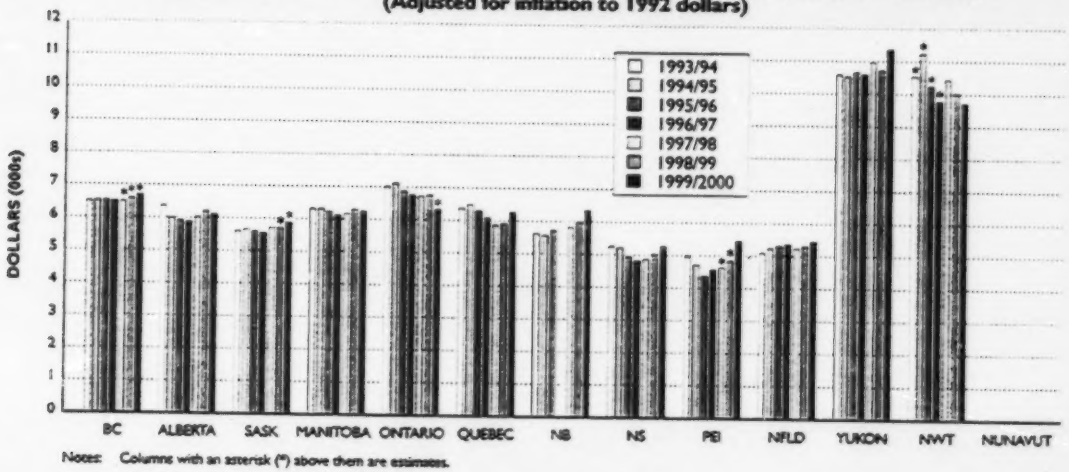
Source: School Finance Branch

AMOUNTS OF ANNUAL CAPITAL PLANS
(millions of dollars)



Source: Capital Planning Branch

TOTAL PUBLIC EXPENDITURES PER STUDENT BY PROVINCE, 1993/94 – 1999/2000
(Adjusted for inflation to 1992 dollars)



Notes: Columns with an asterisk (*) above them are estimates.

Source: Data Management and Student Certification Branch